Dumitru Stăniloae

The Experience of God

Volume 4

The Church: Communion In the Holy Spirit

Orthodox Dogmatic Theology

The Experience of God

These volumes are dedicated to
the blessed memory of
Father Dumitru Staniloae
1903-1993
May his memory be eternal
Αιώνια η μνήμη αυτου
Veșnica pomenire

The Experience of God

Orthodox Dogmatic Theology

Vol. 4: The Church: Communion in the Holy Spirit

Dumitru Staniloae

Translated and edited by
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Foreword by
Peter C. Bouteneff

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by Dumitru Staniloae

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Volume 2. The World: Creation and Deification

Volume 3. The Person of Jesus Christ as God and Savior

Volume 4. The Church: Communion in the Holy Spirit

Volume 5. The Sanctifying Mysteries

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FOREWORD

With this fourth installment in Fr. Dumitru Staniloae's *Dogmatic Theology*, we arrive at his consideration of the Church. One would be tempted to call this his "ecclesiology," but to do so would be to accede to a categorization that the Orthodox Church has employed with unease, or at least with qualification. Fr. Georges Florovsky and other twentieth-century Orthodox writers have observed that the early Christian centuries did not produce an authoritative teaching on the Church, that they did not see it as the subject of theological reflection. If the Orthodox Church has an "ecclesiology," it is one that modern writers have had to synthesize on the basis of (a) the four marks, or "attributes," of the Church in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (yielding reflections on the Church's unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity); (b) the Fathers' reactions to and reflections on schisms and reintegration (notably, e.g., reactions to the Donatist schism and the efforts of St. Basil the Great in reintegrating the homoiousians); and (c) the lived experience of the Church as a liturgical—specifically a baptismal and a Eucharistic—body.

As Fr. Staniloae knew very well, all modern theological reflection represents a contemporary reception/adaptation of the patristic and conciliar legacy—an encounter of the past with the present that presents significant challenges. But the challenges for ecclesiology are different from those surrounding the Person of Christ, which necessar-

ily received more attention in the conciliar era. Partly for this reason, much twentieth-century reflection on ecclesiology has centered on the Church's being the body of Christ, the extension of the Incarnation. Florovsky, who (apart from Fr. Sergius Bulgakov) had the most to say in the past century on the subject of the Church from a theological perspective, pursued this Christological connection robustly—so much so that he has been criticized for a "Christomonistic" approach to the Church. Florovsky was part of a pattern in twentieth-century ecclesiological reflection in the Christian East and West (especially in Roman Catholic authors) that began with a thorough application of the Pauline "body of Christ" image—drawing fully on the qualifiedly *mutual* relationship between head and body—followed by an appended Pneumatological corrective.

Such a pattern was not foreign to the early Church either. Both the Arians and their patristic respondents began with teachings about Jesus Christ. When Arianism later came to extend its subordinationist logic to the Holy Spirit, the Fathers' response was to respond in kind with their homoousian logic. The result has been a relative paucity of patristic, creedal, conciliar, or liturgical emphasis on the Holy Spirit. The repercussions for modern ecclesiology—begin with Christ and then consider the Spirit—were in some sense inevitable.

Enter Fr. Dumitru Staniloae. As we see in this volume and the others that constitute his *Dogmatic Theology*, Fr. Staniloae is both steeped in the ancient tradition and conversant with his contemporaries. He is deeply versed in Scripture and in the Fathers—with an especially loving emphasis on Sts. Cyril, Dionysius, Maximus, and Gregory Palamas—as well as thoroughly conversant with the theological reflection that flourished in the Paris émigré community, including Florovsky, Vladimir Lossky, Paul Evdokimov, Fr. John Meyendorff, and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov. The result in the present volume is a theological work focusing on the Church that draws on the voices of his tradition, studies the reflections of his contemporaries, and constructs a "traditional" synthesis that is unique and fresh. This freshness stems in part from the ways in which he redresses the imbalance of some of the twentieth-century essays on the Church.

It is noteworthy on this score that Fr. Dumitru begins his reflection on the Church with a chapter on the descent of the Holy Spirit. It is equally significant that he begins this same chapter by identifying

the Church as the fulfillment of the saving work of the Incarnation, associating it with Christ's body with Christ remaining as its head—traditional imagery to which he constantly returns. He effects a balance between Christ and the Spirit in the Church, identifying the Spirit with the transition from Christ's saving work in the fleshly body to his saving work in the spiritual body that is the Church. The Spirit makes Christ's human body into the spiritual body, transparent to its divinity, dwelling in our hearts. And in Christ, the Spirit is also in us. In this way, Fr. Dumitru—drawing especially on Sts. Cyril of Alexandria and Gregory Palamas, as well as on contemporary writers—can come up with his traditional but unique formulation of "the Church pneumatized by the Spirit of the risen Christ" (p. 27).

The volume proceeds with substantial reflections on several of the issues that have come to be expected of modern "ecclesiologies," among them being the nature of the priestly (and episcopal) ministry. The focus of his treatment of the priestly ministry remains on Christ, as prophet, priest, and king, and as example for the priesthood shared by all believers and that which is particular to the ordained. Here too, there are unique and stirring ways of describing the ordained priesthood, and the centrality within it of prayer. The indispensable ministry of priesthood is a self-emptying one, in order that it might be filled by the authority and power of Christ. Staniloae's description of synodality puts Orthodox doctrine and practice into a sharp relief from Roman Catholic and Protestant experience, and both here and elsewhere it may be argued that he periodically exaggerates the differences by making sweeping statements about Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, and "the West" as a whole. He has closely studied the most important modern Western thinkers and cites some of them favorably. But in places his image of the West, as juridical, scholastic, and lacking in conciliar ("sobornal") consciousness, is something of a stereotype, albeit not without its genuine roots.

Staniloae's discussion of the four marks of the Church—its unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity—is marked as well by a profound sense of balance: between the Church as the body of Christ and penetrated by the Spirit, and also between things that may be said as dogmatic fact and things that are experienced in people's lives. For example, when it comes to the question of the Church's holiness, he takes note that this is both a gift and a mission. Holiness belongs intrinsi-

cally to the Church by virtue of its identity with Christ and by virtue of people's being baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, but it is at the same time a calling to be fulfilled by its human members. The Church thus dwells within an eschatological tension, aware too that holiness itself is not a static but a dynamic quality. In a memorable image, one that he continues to explore for several pages, Fr. Staniloae says of the Church, "It is a massive ladder in motion that raises all and on which all climb; on this ladder each one is at a different level of holiness, at a different nearness to God, and penetrated to a different degree by His light and love according to the measure of each one's efforts, which are sustained by Christ's power manifested through the Church" (p. 76).

In subsequent passages we have a unique and significant reflection on the Person of the Holy Spirit, on the meaning of grace, and on the meaning of freedom. Grace, writes Fr. Staniloae, is properly understood as "energy," and is associated with the Person of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is at the same time a personalizing and particularizing Spirit and a unifying one: in the Spirit we are multiple and diverse hypostases who are constantly drawing closer to Christ, each in our own way. It is a dialogical process, and dialogue requires mutual freedom. Taking his cue both from the Fathers and some of the mid-twentieth-century theologians and philosophers, Fr. Staniloae has a great deal to say about genuine, "unfalsified" freedom.

In his concluding chapter, on salvation in the body of Christ, Fr. Dumitru is back to drawing sharp contrasts between Orthodox (patristic) Church teaching and some Western examples. Here, although one may have preferred more precise identification of the deficiencies he finds, such as "Calvinist" (or Reformed) or "Lutheran" rather than the blanket "Protestant," he names some significant areas of distinction in emphasis in the language and concept of salvation.

Even if some of this ground is familiar, nowhere in this book do we feel subjected to a mere restatement. This owes partly to his unique manner of exposition. One of the most attractive features of Fr. Staniloae's writing, abundantly evident in the present work, is the way in which he moves from formulations that are somewhat technical and abstract (and no less profound for being so) to those that are piercingly accessible, often drawing on the experience of love. He notes that the Church always has the Spirit, and yet always asks for the Spirit, that the Spirit might come increasingly closer. He likens this to the human em-

brace: "Two persons are not static in the act of embracing each other, but precisely in this embrace there is an impulse to embrace the other more closely" (p. 8).

Fr. Staniloae's work is characterized by that dual fidelity—to the past and to the present—that is the requirement of any theologian of any era. But it is infused by a sense of *inspiration* that is difficult to find in any modern theological writing. Fr. Staniloae's readers are encountering a voice that is thoroughly reliable in that it is so learned and faithful. But it is a deeply personal voice—creative and stunningly, disarmingly free.

And so it is that in this volume on the Church, Fr. Dumitru brings a unique balance: between Christ and the Spirit, between past and present, between fidelity and creativity. All this is ours to receive with gratitude.

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CHAPTER 1

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH

Through the Incarnation, life of obedience, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Son of God as man, the foundation of our salvation has been laid in the fulfillment of our nature, which Christ assumed. But, strictly speaking, our salvation is achieved only through Christ, who comes to dwell within us with the body He bore—a body that has risen, ascended, and been made fully spiritual, that is, has been filled with the Holy Spirit and thus has become perfectly transparent. This indwelling produces the Church. The Church, therefore, is the intended fulfillment of the saving work begun through the Incarnation. If the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension are the first four acts, then the Church is the fifth. In this final act all believers receive the Word as their fundamental hypostasis through the agency of His body extended in us. In this way the sanctification and the beginning of the resurrection that are found already in Christ's body are planted within believers and are being developed through these believers' cooperation with Christ.

Western Christian theory sees salvation as consisting in a juridical and external resolution of the conflict between God and human beings. The Church, therefore, no longer has a role that is absolutely necessary. Protestantism has weakened the Church's visible character, whereas Catholicism—although it did not break abruptly with the continuity of Christian life in the period before Scholasticism—has

maintained the Church's visibility but has given her a character that is more institutional than sanctifying or divinizing, a significance similar to that of other worldly institutions.

Yet Christ does save us, inasmuch as He dwells in us through the Holy Spirit. In this way the power for our salvation and deification shines forth within us from Christ's spiritualized body.

The descent of the Holy Spirit is what gives the Church a real existence; it initiates the indwelling of Christ's deified body in human beings and thereby initiates the Church as well.

The descent of the Holy Spirit is thus the act of transition from Christ's saving work in His personal humanity to the extension of this work within other human beings. Through the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension, Christ lays the foundation of the Church in His body, and through these events, the Church's being exists in its potential form. However, the Son of God became man not for Himself but so that He could extend salvation from His body, as divine life within us. This divine life, extended from His body into those who believe, is the Church. This life shines forth from His body, which was raised up to the full state of pneumatization (spiritualization) through His Ascension and sitting at the right hand of the Father, within the deepest intimacy of infinite life and love that God directs toward human beings.

The Church, which existed potentially in Christ's body, truly came to life through the Holy Spirit's shining forth from Christ's body into human beings. This shining forth began at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and made them the first members of the Church, the first faithful in whom the power of Christ's pneumatized body is extended.[1] Without the Church Christ's saving work could not be accomplished.

The sending of the Holy Spirit is commonly spoken of as an act through which the Holy Spirit took the place of this work of Christ. To speak in this way implies that the Church is considered as the work of the Holy Spirit, who took over Christ's work. But in fact the Holy Spirit must always be considered as the Spirit of Christ; therefore He should never be seen as separated from Christ in any way. The image of Christ in heaven and of the Holy Spirit in the Church is false, because such a vision does not take the Trinitarian Persons' unity seriously. This in turn leads either to rationalism or to sentimentalism, or

even to both as parallel attitudes. Either a vicar of Christ is established, as in Catholicism, or individualism is affirmed. Such individualism is inspired by sentimental whims that are thought to be impulses of the Holy Spirit, but which are not restrained by the presence of a Christ who places before us the model of well-fashioned humanity and who offers us—through the Holy Spirit—the power to develop ourselves in the image of this model.

Through the Holy Spirit Christ Himself penetrates into human hearts, because His body was made spiritual in an incomparable way through the Spirit, who overwhelmed and utterly penetrated Christ's body. St. John Chrysostom says, "As Christ said about Himself, 'And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,' and that is why we can always celebrate Epiphany, so He said about the Spirit, 'He dwells with you and will be in you,' and that is why we can always celebrate Pentecost."[2] We can even celebrate both the Resurrection and Pentecost every day because every day both the Holy Spirit and the risen Lord are with us: "Because, therefore, we can proclaim always the Lord's death, we can also celebrate Pascha [Easter] always . . . But let us see: what is the reason for today's celebration, and why do we do it? Because the Holy Spirit came to us, and, as the only begotten Son of God is with the believers, so is the Spirit of God."[3]

The presence of the Spirit in us is so connected to that of the Son and that of the Father that "without the Spirit we could not name Jesus as Lord." But without the Spirit "we could not name God as Father either," and thus we could not say the prayer Our Father.[4]

Another fact that shows the indissoluble union between the Spirit's and the Son's presence and work within us is that the Spirit's work consists in fashioning us more and more in the image of the Son—that is, as adopted sons of the Father. But this means that the Son Himself imprints His Person more deeply in us as an active and effective model; He also imprints His Sonly affection for the Father, thus receiving us into that same intimacy with the Father and placing us in the same intimate relation with the infinity of the Father's love, into which He entered as man. By accomplishing this in us, the Son cannot remain passive or absent in this activity that the Spirit exercises upon us. St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "Therefore, because the Son dwells in us through His Spirit, we say that we are called to the divine sonship."[5] In other words, if we do not become spiritual, neither can we become children

of the Father, and vice versa. St. Cyril also says, "Christ has sent us the Comforter from heaven, through whom and in whom [Christ] is with us and dwells in us."[6] Again, the Son performs great things in the Spirit: "He became radiant in the Spirit, and He has the glory to perform all things in the Spirit."[7] In other words, the Spirit works in us from within Christ because Christ's body became radiant through the Word's transparence, because the light of God's infinite power and love shines forth from Christ. The Spirit makes Christ more evident to us as God and as Lord, and we have this evidence not because we grasp Christ without His body but through His very body, which has become fully transparent.

St. Gregory Palamas gives expression to all this when he declares that the Son must ascend as man to the Father in order to send the Spirit from the Father's very bosom, from which He proceeds.[8] St. Gregory's affirmation is based on the words of the Gospel of St. John: "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me" (John 15:26). This declaration of Palamas should be understood in the sense that only when Christ, by ascending as man to the Father, is filled bodily with the Holy Spirit—and as such the Father and Himself as God—can the fullness of the Spirit shine forth from His perfectly pneumatized body; this is because His body itself can no longer appear in a visible way, but through the Spirit it permeates the hearts of those who believe in Him. St. John Chrysostom says the same thing: "For our nature has ascended ten days before [on Ascension] to the royal throne, and the Holy Spirit has descended today [Pentecost] to our nature. The Lord has raised our nature, and the Holy Spirit has descended . . . Wishing to show that He reconciled the Father with our nature, He sent Him the gifts of reconciliation. We sent faith [in the Person of Christ as man], and we received the gifts; we sent Him obedience, and have received righteousness."[9]

This means that through the Son as man we have entered into the intimacy of God's infinite love, and this infinity of divine love shines forth over and within us through the Person of the Spirit. In this the Son and His Sonly affection for the Father do not remain distant from us. The gifts sent are not external to the Lord's body, but they come from the plenitude to which He ascended through death and Resurrection. The Spirit comes to us as the bearer of the Father's infinite love for

His Son, for through the Son this infinity embraces us too and is also communicated to us through the Son's transparence. In this transparence of the Son, not only are the Godhead of the Father and His love shown to us, but human persons who believe in Christ and are open in Him to the Father are also shown to the Father.

There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit—who makes Christ's presence in us more effective through His work, which is felt more intensely—comes to the forefront in our senses, but He does so in order to make Christ's presence felt even more intensely. The sun's light that penetrates the clouds shines forth not for its own sake but to make the visible things clearer. In addition to this, Christ continues to be present in the Holy Spirit's work, which we feel more intensely. The Spirit comes within us through the transparence of Christ's body. Through this transparence the active infinity of Christ's love has entered into communication with us. Christ said, "He [the Holy Spirit] will take of what is Mine" (John 16:14). He will take not from a Christ who remains distant and passive, nor from an impersonal deposit collected by Christ, but from the Christ who continues to be active together with the Holy Spirit, bringing us the divine powers through His transparent body, because these powers are no longer hindered from communicating with us by a body that is not completely transparent, like the one before the Resurrection was.

The Holy Spirit comes forth in the work for our sensitization also because in Christ's fully pneumatized body the Holy Spirit is present as a Person who is full of loving initiative, just as He is in Christ as God from eternity. And through this initiative of His as a Person, the Spirit makes the Person of Christ more evident for us, that is, full of initiative and power. Thus the Spirit who is being communicated to us from the Person of Christ makes Christ more evident as a Person and at the same time makes the power of Christ Himself communicable in a more accentuated manner. The Holy Spirit is now penetrating us with His full presence because the Lord's human body—His link to our humanity—was made fully transparent for the divine infinity that is directed toward us.

It is precisely through this that the Spirit can now reveal Himself as a hypostasis, that is, in a distinctly accentuated and sensible manner in the spiritual sense of the word (as this befits Him), or rather, in a manner in which He could not have revealed Himself before Christ's com-

ing or even before Christ's bodily death, Resurrection, and Ascension. For the Spirit cannot fully penetrate within a body unless that body is fully pneumatized and transparent. This means that Christ Himself shows the hypostasis of the Spirit. Before the Resurrection the Spirit cooperated with Christ from a deeper plane, in order to show the Son's divine hypostasis more clearly through the Incarnation and through the deeds that He performed, including suffering death and especially through the Resurrection. It can be said that inasmuch as Christ made His hypostasis clearer, the Holy Spirit's hypostasis also became clearer.

St. Gregory Palamas says all of this:

> The wonderful acts performed through the Lord's body, which showed Christ as being the only begotten of God in His own hypostasis, united with us in the last days, have come to an end. The acts that show the Holy Spirit in His own hypostasis now begin to be performed, in order that we may know and enter deeply, through meditation, into the mystery of the Holy Trinity, [a mystery] great and worthy of worship. For the Holy Spirit also worked beforehand. He spoke through the prophets and foretold future things. Later He worked through the disciples by casting out demons and healing diseases. But now He has also been manifested in His own hypostasis through tongues of fire. By resting as a Master upon Christ's disciples and being somehow enthroned in them, He made them the organs of His own power.[10]

St. Cyril of Alexandria also says, "We possess not only grace but the Spirit Himself, who remains in us."[11]

Paul Evdokimov says, "During *Christ's earthly mission*, man's relationship with the Holy Spirit was effected only through and in Christ. On the contrary, *after Pentecost*, it is the relationship with Christ that is effected only through and in the Holy Spirit."[12] But he also says, "Alongside the *Lordship* of Christ, the lordship of the Spirit is established."[13]

The Holy Spirit comes as a hypostasis because He rested with His hypostatic plenitude in the Lord's ascended body. The Spirit as hypostasis was able to manifest Himself to us only in Christ's body, which became transparent to God's infinite and fully intensive depths in their work for us. Only in His quality as hypostasis does the Spirit make the presence of His divine activity felt in all its power. The

Spirit's incomplete transparence in Christ's body before the Resurrection was due to the fact that Christ's body was also incompletely transparent in the conditions of His terrestrial existence. The Spirit's full transparence through Christ's body after the Resurrection—and, implicitly, the sensing of the intensity of His hypostatic presence—is due to the complete pneumatization of the Lord's body; this pneumatization also makes Christ better felt as a hypostasis, better felt in the intensity of His work. Therefore the Spirit's full transparence is at the same time a spiritual transparence and a greatly increased intensity of Christ's presence.

We should not think that the Holy Spirit and Christ pass successively from the first plane to the second, nor does one play the role of medium for the other. During Christ's earthly life the Spirit was not fully revealed as God by the heightened intensity of His activity, and that is why Christ was not fully revealed as a divine hypostasis either. After the Ascension Christ was also known as God in an increased manner through the Spirit's full manifestation; that is, Christ reveals Himself fully as a divine hypostasis through the fact that through Him the Spirit Himself is revealed, or can be revealed, as a hypostasis. Neither St. Gregory Palamas nor any other Church Father tells us that through the revelation of the Spirit's hypostasis Christ passed to a more distant plane, one that is less felt.

The Holy Spirit was manifested at Pentecost—at the beginning of His shining forth as a hypostasis from Christ's humanity—in a somewhat more sensible manner on one hand to convince the apostles and those who did not belong to the Church of this beginning of His shining forth, and on the other hand because Christ did not yet shine forth fully in human beings as a divine hypostasis. From this point of view, it can be said that the Church receives her concrete existence through the descent of the Holy Spirit, because Christ descends now for the first time within human hearts.

But the Spirit remains forever in this shining forth. The expression "the Holy Spirit remains in the Church" is not contrary to this permanent shining forth. The expression is correct only in the sense that the Lord Himself, who as a man is on the divine throne together with the Father, is at the same time within the hearts of those who believe and within the communion among them, namely, in the Church; thus by shining forth from Christ, the Holy Spirit shines forth from

the Church, in which Christ dwells. Given that Christ is both on the divine throne and comes continuously from the throne to those who receive or have the faith and who develop it through good works—coming more intensely to those who advance in their faith—the Spirit also comes from beyond the Church, or beyond the intimacy of the believers. That is why on one hand the Church has the Spirit constantly, and on the other hand she asks for Him constantly. She asks for Him because she has Him, for the Spirit gives her the strength to ask for Him through prayer, so that He may continue to come more and more (cf. Rom 8:26).

Hence the Church comes into existence and is maintained in Christ through the Holy Spirit, who descends at Pentecost and remains in the Church. The Spirit also comes continuously, being asked for through prayers and the avoidance of sin, just as Christ, who is in the Church, remains and grows in her—or rather, the Church grows in Him also through prayer and by avoiding sin. However, the Holy Spirit is not static because He remains in the Church, just as Christ is not static because He remains in the Church. One cannot say that only in Their coming is Their movement shown, together with the elevation of the Church more fully in Them. Where the Holy Spirit and Christ are, there is no lack of life. They constantly exhort human hearts to ask for Them, so that They continue to come more and more. Two persons are not static in the act of embracing one another, but precisely in this embrace there is an impulse to embrace the other more closely. Only when someone does not live the faith does the indwelling of the Spirit and Christ have a static character. But in this case the indwelling is more a potentiality than a living and actual fact.

Both the Spirit and Christ, who remain in the Church and in the faithful, are not static for the additional reason that They are not impersonal powers, but Persons. And persons are always in motion, and they always want to communicate themselves even more. From the beginning, the divine Persons come and remain willingly; They come and They remain in order to come in a higher degree, and thus to maintain and increase the living communion. For this communion those to whom They come must prepare themselves by asking for and wanting an increased coming of the divine Persons. Even the first coming of the Spirit, His "descent" *par excellence*, takes place over the apostles who "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts

1:14). This surely occurred on the basis of a partial possession of the Spirit whom Christ gave to them after the Resurrection, in the form of a shining forth from His body, which was essentially pneumatized through the Resurrection (John 20:22–23); and on the basis of a partial possession of the Spirit, who by remaining in them exhorted them to ask for Him even more. Consequently the Church is so essentially connected to the initial descent, and also to the continuous descent of the Spirit as hypostasis in human beings, that "without the Spirit, the Church would not have come into being; and if the Church exists, this is the sign that the Spirit is present within her."[14] We understand the presence of the Spirit as hypostasis, as stated above, as His distinctly intense presence with the entire content of the Godhead that pertains to Him as hypostasis. Concomitantly with this distinctly intense, evident, and rich presence of the Spirit, Christ is also present in a way just as evident, intense, and rich—namely, in a hypostatic manner.

The Spirit descended and gave existence to the Church. He remains in the Church, preserving her, because our human nature was raised up on the divine throne, being totally penetrated and rendered transparent by the hypostasis of the Logos. As such the Church was filled with the Spirit as hypostasis following Christ's death and Resurrection, through which she herself penetrated into our being in a distinct way.

The hypostatic Spirit descends in the form of tongues of fire distributed over all the apostles, showing that Christ's will extends the divine power and the holiness of His human nature over the entire human creation "in order to reconcile with Him, through the Spirit, the entire divided world."[15]

The human nature assumed by Christ does not belong to a human hypostasis that can close itself off and use its nature individualistically; Christ's human nature belongs to God the Word, the hypostasis from whom the reasons of the entire creation derive and toward whom they tend to return. Thus "our entire nature was in the hypostasis of Christ,"[16] which means that in a certain sense Christ is the central, fundamental hypostasis of all human beings. As such, the hypostasis of the Spirit too, united with Christ in His human nature, can be extended into the entire human race. Christ's human nature became much more able to include all creation after the Resurrection and Ascension, as it opened itself in this pneumatized state to the divine infinitude, which wants to descend lovingly over and in all of

us and to gather us in unity with Christ and among ourselves. He who opens himself to the divine infinitude in Christ, participating in this infinitude, cannot have the tendency to not be united with all others in this love with which he is filled.

The descent of the Spirit in the form of tongues of fire shows that Christ's will not only encompasses within the Church—namely, within His love—the entire world, which is unified in this love, but also preserves the identity of each person in this unity. Christ and the Spirit do not destroy the variety of creation: "A new and amazing thing has happened: as then [at the tower of Babel] the various tongues divided the world, so now the tongues have united it and have brought into harmony [in a symphony] the things divided."[17] The Logos, from whom the reasons of all human beings are derived, wanted to reconcile them not only to Himself as the unique Reason but also to the Spirit as divine love and might. For "the fruit of the Spirit is love" (Gal 5:22), and "love is the root, the source, and the mother of all good things."[18] That is why the tongues have the form of fire: because the fire burns everything that is evil—everything that divides[19]—and also because the fire sustains the enthusiasm for the love of God and of other human beings, the enthusiasm for ascending to the infinity of God's love and for the spreading of this love toward all people, so that all may gather in it.

We have shown above that the work of salvation, whose foundation was laid in Christ's human nature, is being fulfilled in the form of the Church, which is our union with God and among ourselves. Only within the harmony between human beings in God is it shown that they have abandoned egoism as a general image of sin, or of their confinement in themselves as narrow monads. That is why the state of salvation is equivalent to belonging to the Church, or to the gathering of those who are saved into the Church, with their common participation in the body that Christ raised up—beyond any self-preoccupation—to the sacrificial state that was made permanent in Him. On the basis of His divine hypostasis and of His sacrificial state, Christ wishes and is able to gather all human beings by extending Himself in them through the Holy Spirit, who from Christ's body imprints upon them the same disposition for sacrifice.

Thus the fact that the Spirit appears in the form of tongues of fire upon the apostles shows that the Spirit is not truly present except in the communion of the Church, or where the Church is.

But the Holy Spirit has descended not only in the form of tongues of fire but also accompanied by "a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2), "with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers" (Acts 1:14). This indicates the power with which the first members of Church were filled. A new reality was being born in the world. And if any new reality is born out of a new power that this reality bears within itself, then the Church, in contrast, was born out of a new power from heaven: the infinite power of divine love, which she will bear in herself, or out of which she will drink without exhausting it; she will communicate it, constantly refreshed, to the world at all times. The Church was born as a reality not out of a limited and transitory power in the world but out of a power from heaven that she will bear in herself, communicating it to the world. There was established a human community that has as its foundation and bearer the incarnate Son of God, through whom God's infinite love is communicated; there was established a reality of communion that will not exhaust its powers, because it will always drink of them from God's infinity through the divine hypostasis' human body. This was a reality or a communion that represented "heaven on earth"; the incarnate Word dwelled in it with His continuously deifying and unifying power.

CHAPTER 2

THE THEANDRIC CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH

A. The Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, and Christ as Her Head

The Church is the union of all that exists, or, in other words, she is destined to encompass all that exists: God and creation. She is the fulfillment of God's eternal plan: the unity of all. In her are found both the eternal and the temporal, with the latter destined to be overwhelmed by eternity; both the uncreated and the created, with the latter destined to be overwhelmed by the uncreated, to be deified; both the spiritual things of all categories and matter, with the latter destined to be spiritualized; both heaven and the earth permeated by heaven; both the nonspatial and the spatial; both "I" and "thou," "I" and "we," "we" and "thou," united in a divine "Thou," or in a direct, dialogical relation with Him. *The Church is a human communitarian "I" in Christ as a "Thou," but at the same time the Church's "I" is Christ.* The Church is the "I" of the prayers of all sentient beings: earthly beings, angels, and saints; in this way prayer has a great unifying role. In the Church all pray in me and for me, and I pray in all and for all. In the Church all things are united but unconfused in this unity. The Church is the body of Christ and as such is united with Him and distinct from Him. *The Church is the immanence that has transcendence in herself, the Triune community of Persons full of an infinite love for the world,* maintaining in the world a constant movement of

self-transcendence through love. The Church is Christ extended with His deified body in humanity, or, in other words, she is this humanity united with Christ and having Christ imprinted on her with His deified body. If the Son of God had not become incarnate and had not deified the body through the Resurrection and Ascension, then the link that connects God with creation would be missing, just as God's love—meant to be poured into us and to attract us to the union with Him in love—would also be missing.

The Church, therefore, has a theandric constitution.[1] Her content consists of Christ united with the Father and the Spirit according to His divine nature, and united with us according to His human nature. Being included in the incarnate hypostasis of Christ, the Church could be called Christ, if we understand Christ as extended into humanity. The Church is "Christ Himself, who exists from before the ages in the bosom of the Father, who at the fulfillment of time became man, who is and always lives with us, and who works, saves, and extends Himself throughout the ages."[2]

These two factors, Christ and humanity, are so united in the Church that one cannot be seen without the other, nor can we speak of them separately. Christ is said to be the head of the Church, and the Church is said to be the body of Christ. In the Church Christ has the position of head, of foundation, and of source of infinite life. Any talk about one implies the other, and vice versa. If, however, we speak now of one and then of the other, we do so in order to bring to light the special position that each has in this unity. Christ's special position in the Church consists specifically in His quality as head, as the factor that unites the faithful in Him as if in one body, as well as in His quality as model and source of power according to which the faithful conduct themselves—a model by which they are filled and with which they are imprinted as they become after His image.

Whereas the Holy Spirit did not assume human nature as His image and therefore cannot be thought of as a model for the human person, Christ, by assuming human nature as His image, is thought of as a model for the human person. But the human person cannot actually become a full image of Christ without the work of the Holy Spirit, or without the help of the Spirit.

Christ became the head of the Church because the divine hypostasis has assumed the human image, the firstfruits of our nature; as

man He took a central position among human beings. But this position becomes effective only inasmuch as it can communicate, in the Spirit, the divine power in human form and can imprint Christ on us as the human person's true model: the deified man. Christ also became the head of the Church because He has raised these first-fruits to the state of sacrifice—a state superior to any egoistic self-preoccupation—as well as to the state of resurrection. In this way He bore the two states, joined together and imprinted on His body, in order to communicate to us the power to appropriate them, or to raise our humanity to them. This means raising our humanity to the union with the personal God's infinity, for only through the sacrifice of offering ourselves to God do we tear down the walls that enclose us in our limitations, and thus we enter into full communion with God and with our fellow human beings.

The Holy Apostle Paul directly named Christ the head of the Church: Christ "is the head of the body, the Church" (Col 1:18, 24). "And He [God the Father] put all things under His [Christ's] feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:22–23). Or again: "[That we] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love" (Eph 4:15–16). "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the Church; and He is the Savior of the body" (Eph 5:23). In the Epistle to the Colossians (2:18–19), the Holy Apostle Paul exhorts the Christians to not let themselves be deceived by those who draw them toward inferior, enslaving powers, causing them to "not [hold] fast to the head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God." That is, the head is He from whom they receive the power to grow in freedom and love. In other places St. Paul, without directly naming Christ "the head" of the Church, says this indirectly by the fact that he calls the Church "the body of Christ" (Rom 12:4–8; 1 Cor 6:15–16; 10:16–17; 12:12–27). In naming Christ "the head of the Church," the Holy Apostle Paul specifies that the body is fulfilled, nourished in its growth and harmony, and redeemed by Christ. Christ is the head of the body in the sense that "in this body one lives the new

life according to Christ in the Holy Spirit, and in Him one procures the grace, the salvation, and the divine life of the head for all the members of the body."[3] In Christ the head, the horizon of God's infinity is opened up, and through Him and out of this infinity the body of the Church receives the power for life and unifying love: "Consequently, the Church is understood by the Orthodox as new life in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, as unity of the charismatic life, because it is the living, unitary, and whole organism, the body of Christ, from whose head there pours the new divine life into all the members of the body through the work of the Holy Spirit."[4] "Christ as head and the Church thus form a spiritual unity, a unique, living divine-human organism."[5] Thus Christ is "the Savior" of the Church, or of the humanity that is gathered together in Him.

In the aforementioned places the Holy Apostle Paul shows us Christ as the head of the Church by the fact that in Him the Church is structured as a harmonious (συμβιβαζόμενον) whole in which every member fulfills his corresponding function (Eph 4:15–16; Col 2:18–19; Eph 2:21).

This direct bond or relationship of each believer with Christ unites the believers with one another, but only within the framework of His unique body. On the other hand this direct relationship with Christ—God become man—makes them victorious over all the powers and tendencies that would pull them down and would keep them closed off in their egoism and in the immanent horizon of death and corruptibility. This fact facilitates, in turn, the unity among believers within the infinite and free environment of the Spirit or of the Holy Trinity's loving communion.

B. The Foundation of the Church: God's Incarnate Son

The Holy Fathers developed the teaching that Christ is the head of the Church; they saw the Church as founded on the fact that through the Incarnation Christ assumed the fruition of our nature. They also based this teaching on the fact that He accepted the state of sacrifice and conquered death, and thus out of His sacrificial state He was able to communicate to us too the power to overcome the egoism in ourselves and the potential to partake of His Resurrection; we liberate ourselves even now from the limitations of egoism and of the laws of corrupt-

ibility by also putting ourselves in connection with the infinite and free life found in Christ's body.

By assuming "the firstfruits of humanity" through the Incarnation,[6] Christ "assumed the body of the Church,"[7] "because the entire human race was contained and recapitulated in the human nature He assumed."[8] "The entire human race was in Christ because He was man . . . Because by becoming man He possessed the entire nature so to remedy it wholly, changing it to its previous image."[9] Or again: "Our entire nature was in the hypostasis of Christ."[10] In this way our nature participated in His infinite divine life.

The hypostasis that will become the fundamental hypostasis of the entire human race—the hypostasis of the entire creation, brought to the state of a "new creation" that is constantly renewed by the incarnate Word's infinite and unfading life—is established through the Son of God's Incarnation as man: "In Christ, as a child born without sin, the beginning of the new building up [of creation] was brought about."[11]

The Holy Fathers, however, do not view Christ as the head of the Church in a separate way through the Incarnation, through the Crucifixion, and through the Resurrection, but through the interconnection of all these events. Through the Incarnation Christ has laid only the first foundation of the Church, assuming "the firstfruits of our nature." The body that He assumed became the Church's complete foundation because it passed through death and Resurrection. Only in this way is His body the source from which the power of dying to sin and the power of the resurrection flow within us; only in this way did His body, fully pneumatized and transparent for the infinite divine life, become the medium through which we receive this life. Only by giving importance to each of these actions through which Christ becomes the Church's head, foundation, and source of life do the Church Fathers understand Christ, who passed with His body through all these moments and rose to this state of pneumatization and full transparence for the divine life.

In order to be the head of the Church, Christ must have something in common with those who make up His body. But at the same time He must have the special position as head; that is, He must also have something distinct from all those who make up His body. This distinctiveness is His Godhead. Christ is thus a head who sees incomparably farther than any man can see through his own head or mind, and He

can communicate to His Church a light and life that are incomparably greater than those which the human person's typical head can communicate to his body. In His quality as head, Christ is open to the light and to the infinite life that He communicates to His Church. Through His quality as God, and also through the quality of His risen body, Christ is the head *par excellence* of the entire creation, being raised above everything that is human and created; there is no other head above Him. But He is especially the head of the humanity gathered in Him, because He became man and rose again as man.

To be able to become the head of humanity—to become man and to establish an organic relation with humanity so that He could easily communicate the infinite divine life to it—the Son of God must have something in Himself that makes Him fit for this. On the other hand humanity too must have something in itself which makes it possible for the Son of God to become man and thus to become humanity's head, a head who communicates the light and the infinite divine life to humanity.

The Word of God must have something in Himself that makes Him fit to open to the humanity in Himself the infinite horizons of the divine life; likewise, humanity must have something in itself capable of knowing and of partaking of these horizons in the Word of God.[12] The Son of God must be able to communicate the light and infinite divine life to humanity in human ways—that is, to make our humanity His own without destroying it in Himself and without allowing it to remain closed to the light and infinite divine life. This adaptation of God the Word to our humanity and of our humanity to God the Word formed the initial foundation for the union of the two natures in the Person of God the Word.

There is something similar here to the adaptation that exists between the head of the human body and the body itself, and vice versa. The human body has in itself a unique rationality corresponding to the reason placed in its head. But the reason of the head imprints or molds the body's rationality in conformity with itself. The head gives the whole body orientation, a light that is projected around it and even further. Thus the whole body can move within the light in which the head moves.

There is an infinitely greater difference between the Word of God's hypostasis and the body He assumed and between the incarnate

Christ and the body of humanity, that is, between Christ the head and the body of the Church. However, there is an adaptation on account of which the Son of God can enter humanity. In this way He takes humanity into Himself and opens up for it the infinite divine horizons of light and life, giving humanity the potential to move and live within these horizons.

In assuming humanity as His image, the divine Logos transforms it more and more into His likeness; then, because He becomes the head of the Church, the Church herself is imprinted on every member as a model of Him, causing the member—through his quality as image—to become increasingly more like Him. But He does this inasmuch as every member endeavors to be transformed more into the likeness of the incarnate Word:

> For the knowledge of Him is measured for everyone according to his understanding regarding the incarnate Word. It is small in the small ones and large in the large ones. For the prophets say, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him" [Ps 89:7], that is, by those who are near Him through the sharpening of their understanding. Even Paul suffers the birth pains "until Christ is formed in you" [Gal 4:19], that is, until the supernatural features of His Godhead are slowly imprinted on their mind . . . The entire age is divided into three periods: the past, the present, and the future. The end will come in the third period.[13]

And that end will be endless, because during its course human beings will know and experience the endless divine infinity to the fullest.

St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "Christ builds the Church out of intelligible rocks,"[14] according to the words of the Holy Apostle Paul: "In [Christ] you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2:22). These intelligible rocks are human beings endowed with minds, and the minds are the same as Christ's human mind: capable of being opened toward the divine infinity. This infinity comes to them through Christ's mind, which is borne by the hypostasis of the infinite divine life and light, who can truly transmit this infinity of divine life and light through Himself to human minds and to complete human beings. This is why St. Cyril of Alexandria considers the Church's glory to be infinitely greater than that of the old temple: not only because that temple was built with material rocks but also

because God sent His glory upon it from without, not through His human mind in communication with the minds of human beings. The Church is built of human beings, and in the dwelling or in the community made up of them, the Son of God Himself enters by the fact that He became man. He enters, however, as "the cornerstone," as the stone that supports the entire edifice of the human community in Him, as the keystone inseparable from the human community of the Church, and at the same time He makes the entire heaven of the divine infinity transparent and communicable to this human community. "For the Church rests in Christ, and He carries us, not allowing the holy and honored nation to fall under the heavy labors [of passions]."[15] The Church lives in the incarnate God's unmediated glory; she sees and reflects it: "For generations the Church has seen the glory of the Son, and in Him, the Father."[16]

Christ is the Pantocrator of the Church in a special way, because He is the Pantocrator of creation. Christ maintains the Church in Himself as a unique body—as a unity but not as an impersonal unity—because He is in a direct dialogue with every member of the Church, and thus He keeps each one connected with the others. Therefore, being in a dialogue with the whole Church—a dialogue in which He is understood as a symphonic partner—Christ dwells in a living way in this house of His, in which every believer is built up as an intelligible, personal rock. In this way Christ continuously harmonizes the building up of the Church and keeps it always alive.

Humanity itself is created partly as a body, partly in order to achieve full completion as a body. It is a dialogical body even before it is gathered in Christ, but a much more symphonic dialogical body after it is gathered in Christ. For without a head—which on one hand is a head from among its members, and on the other hand is a superior head, the absolute head—humanity cannot fully actualize its quality as a body. This is because its members, who are equal, do not easily accept their unity under a head from among themselves because such a head does not open a horizon superior to them or raise them to that horizon, nor does he connect them with the powers of eternal life.

Gathered together under Christ the head, the human heads or persons do not lose their quality as heads, inasmuch as human nature is personalized in them. From the divine-human head or Person—who is Christ—they receive the light and the power to be heads, or fully real-

ized persons who participate in the supreme head's light and assume the responsibility of directing their own being in accordance with this light that they have received. In this way they are called to be heads who through grace are equal with Christ, or "co-Christs," who enjoy full freedom in the loving relationship with Him without breaking the unity among themselves; at the same time they find in Christ the harmony of His fully realized body. For they all recognize Him as the unique source of light above them, to which they can rise.

In Byzantine iconography there is an icon in which those persons who have reached happiness in paradise are depicted as being together in the bosom of Abraham. Abraham's head, which is above all the persons and under which they gather, does not nullify their identity as distinct heads. Abraham is the head of those who believe because he is the first who recognized the personal God and believed in Him, as well as in the pledge of future salvation in Christ. He is the first to have seen higher and farther; he saw—at least from afar—the infinite horizons in Christ. In this sense other people can also be heads for others through their higher vision and through a greater love for God and human beings. But all are only types of the true head, of the supreme head who is Christ. Because He sees higher than all, He sees and has in Himself the divine infinity itself, and He leads us to the heavenly Kingdom (cf. Heb 2:10). "In Your light we see light" (the Great Doxology; Ps 36:9).

Having Christ as its head and being constituted in this way in the Church, humanity thus has ultimate transcendence in an intimate relation with itself, as its loving and living hypostasis; it can transcend itself with the help of this fundamental hypostasis, who has descended to the ranks of human hypostases. Through Him humanity finds itself in an endless transcending.

The life of the Church is different from that of natural humanity, even though the latter is not nullified but imprinted with the Spirit of Christ's deified body—or better said, natural humanity is open to the divine infinity from this body of which it partakes: "For the Church is moved to a different life, and through her we understand ourselves; through the faith in Christ we have gained union with God. When you hear about the Church, understand that the holy multitude of believers is being spoken of, those who by dying to the worldly and bodily life are on the path toward increasing their life in Christ, and this is a way of growth toward better and superior things."[17]

The glory that fills the Church coincides with her members' complete acquisition of their quality as children of God; this quality means the most intimate communion with the Father. It consists not only in seeing but also in partaking of the Sonly glory that the incarnate Word of God—the head of the Church—possesses as man. Because Christ is in an organic relation with the body, His glory is transmitted to the entire body. But the state of being children is obtained by transcending the natural and limited life for God's infinite life, within the intimacy of the filial relationship with Him. One advances constantly in this state and simultaneously one advances, even during the earthly life, toward resurrection and incorruptibility.

C. The Church Imprinted with Christ's Sacrifice

We can see that the Incarnation alone does not yet make Christ the absolute head of the humanity that is being saved, and on this basis He does not carry it to its full salvation. The humanity that He assumed through the Incarnation does not yet have all the attributes through which He can be our true head and through which He can dwell within us, filling us with His light and with His power to proceed toward the incorruptible and eternal life in God and to be included in it.

Through His Incarnation the Word of God has achieved only the act of His reinstallation in the position of humanity's head in view of its salvation. The human nature that He assumed must contribute to traveling along a path, to the performance of certain acts through which the incarnate Word is to make this nature fully fit for this role of His as head, as a man in relation to humanity. Our salvation will be achieved only inasmuch as we, under the leadership of Christ the head, freely cover a path similar to the one that the firstfruits of our humanity covered in Him, in order to reach the state of complete deification. Only thus could the human nature that He assumed enjoy its complete transcendence in God, a transcendence that could be offered by the divine hypostasis in whom human nature was assumed; only in doing the same can we too—out of the power concentrated in the human nature assumed by Christ and also on account of this nature's own efforts—be raised in a real way toward participation in what Christ the head can procure for us: the infinity of the divine life and the freedom therein.

The effort of the human nature in Christ makes possible our effort in the Church, as His effort is also a model for our effort. It is the same effort for freedom in the infinite life of the free relationship with God, and against the slavery to corruption that is brought about by the passions. Only in this way can Christ actualize His entire effectiveness as head of the Church, as our head who leads us toward the life of free and loving relationship with the infinite God.

Through perfect and loving obedience to His divine will (which is one with the will of the Father), or through being in conformity with this will and suffering death on the cross, *the human nature in Christ had to overcome the enslaving innocent passions that through sin entered our nature* as so many weaknesses, with death as their ultimate consequence. Our nature is thus open to the unobstructed view of the Godhead's infinite horizon and to participation in the life found therein. This state is obtained through the Resurrection: "For Immanuel has died, widening our entrance into the Holy of Holies and opening for us who believe in Him the doors of the Church in heaven."[18]

Christ keeps His humanity fully open, through its sacrificial state, to the divine infinity, and in the Church He communicates this state to us too if we open ourselves to the horizons in which His humanity was raised. St. Cyril of Alexandria insisted on this fact very strongly, saying that only by assuming Christ's state of sacrifice can we enter into the presence of the Father.

Only in the state of sweet fragrance brought about by this sacrifice are we well pleasing to God; that is, only by denying ourselves can we realize the relationship of infinite love with God, who is infinite in His love. "Christ is a whole burnt offering, completely and not partially, offering Himself as a sweet fragrance to God the Father. By this He is truly the Saint of Saints. And we are also sanctified in Him."[19] According to the Holy Apostle Paul, "We are to God the fragrance of Christ" (2 Cor 2:15).[20] "The most proper place for the divine sacrifices is the Church of God, for that is where Christ's mystery is necessarily officiated."[21] In the Church we are cleansed of sins by partaking of Christ's sacrifice;[22] that is, in the Church we abandon the slavery of the passions that limit us, and we gain our freedom in the relationship of infinite love with God, to whom we offer ourselves by denying ourselves, and thus we partake of Christ's similar offering.

By offering ourselves as a sacrifice to Christ, by renouncing the egoism that limits us, we place ourselves in a peaceful and perfectly loving relationship, in a relationship of total openness, with God the Father; we open ourselves through love to His loving infinity, just like His incarnate Son. In this way we sanctify ourselves. And this takes place in the Church, in the milieu of the communion that the faithful have with the sacrificed Christ and among themselves. In the Church we obtain in Christ the state of sacrifice, or of His offering to the Father—the state of openness toward Him from whom the waves of life and infinite love flow eternally. The Father objectively opens for us our entrance to Him, to the relationship with Him in love, but we too must subjectively eliminate the obstacles from the path that takes us closer to God, obstacles that close us off within ourselves. "For God the Father regards us in Christ and thus remembers us, and in Him [Christ] He made us known and worthy of regard, as it is written in the book of God."[23] "Christ takes away our sins, and through Him we are accepted when we offer our gifts in the Spirit to God the Father,"[24] that is, when we approach Him with a love through which we forget ourselves.

Because all members of the Church offer this sacrifice with the power of Christ's sacrifice, and because they offer it together with Christ in the Church—that is, in the communion of all with God—or because the Church herself does this, she lives in the Triune Persons' relations of infinite love. The Church has Christ as her head, through whom she is introduced and advances in that life,[25] and she has the Holy Spirit as her animating soul. However, she transcendently offers herself as a sacrifice to the Father—toward this personal source of her existence, of life, and of love without end—because He is the source of the other two divine Persons as well as of the will to create and save the world.

As the renunciation of sins, of the varied forms of egoism, our sacrifice takes the form of the virtues. That is why the Church is also the place where the virtues are cultivated as loving openings toward God after the likeness of Christ, who is "the essence of virtues," according to St. Maximus the Confessor.

The Church is a community of love that is bathed in the relationships of the infinite Triune love. She lives in the Tripersonal (or Trisubjective) and inexhaustible ocean of this love and life, or in relation with this infinite source by drinking from it. Being brought

together potentially in the Son, by virtue of His Incarnation out of love, we are brought together even more through His sacrifice, which gives us strength for our sacrifice, for abandoning the limitation of our egoism, and for entering into the loving, infinite relationship with God and with our fellow human beings. Those who are sanctified through a more continuous and fuller sacrifice are closer in the body of Christ to His mind and heart; they are more intimately introduced to the infinity of life and power found in His body and borne by one of the hypostases of the Trinity's infinite life and love. Thus they are loved even more by the Father, and in their consciousness they experience more intensely the Father's waves of life and love, which are poured out to the Son and from the Son, through the Holy Spirit, into our hearts.

In the Church there breathes the Spirit of love between the Father and the Son, the Spirit who brings to and implants in human persons the filial love toward the Father, as well as the ability to sense the Father's love for the Son and His love through the Son for those who are united with Him in the body of the Church. The breath of this love, brought to us by the Spirit, has created the world, and it recreates it as the Church.

In loving us Christ does not want to be alone as a loving sacrifice before the Father; He does not want to gain, as man, the Father's love only for Himself but also for his brothers and sisters in humanity:

> Christ remains forever in the Father's eyes. For when the only begotten became like us, then He entered [as man] into the Holy of Holies [into the intimacy of the Father] through the greatest and perfect tabernacle, that is, into heaven, to appear, as it was written, before God for us [Heb 9:24]. For He does not manifest Himself before the Father, but in Himself He manifests us who have fallen from His face and eyes because of the disobedience and sin that ruled over all. Therefore in Christ we gained the proximity and the boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies, as the wise Paul has told us [Heb 10:19]. For as we rose in Christ and have reached the heavenly things, so we have come before the Father.[26]

In Christ we have entered and we advance into the infinity of God's life and love that springs from the Father, because this infinity of life and love, which fills Christ's humanity through His sacrifice and

Resurrection, has become accessible to us through the sacrifice that takes us to resurrection.

We do not have to suffer a bloody death like Christ, for it is not through us that death is overcome, as it was in the firstfruits of humanity. It is in our deeds through which we continuously renounce sins and advance in virtues—deeds through which we abandon the limitation of egoism and open ourselves to the infinite God and to the relationship in Him with our fellow human beings—that our will is continuously moved to actualize not a life for ourselves, that is, a life that leads to death, but a life for the immortal God and for our fellow human beings in God. In this active intention there is potentially contained the possibility that we may physically die for God and in order to help our fellow human beings, so that we may abandon the limitation of our own egoism—which leads to death—and may enter into the wide spaces of God's infinite life and love.

Thus our sacrifice, being a continuous renunciation of sins as forms of egoism, takes the form of the virtues and of constant advancement in them; it takes the form of loving openness toward God and our fellow human beings, given that all virtues are animated by love for God and for our fellow human beings and that they end up in a supreme and endless love. As such our sacrifice or our virtues have a dynamic and uninterrupted character: "I consider that we must offer as a sweet fragrance to God our ways of living [virtues] in Christ, becoming like fragrances and offering ourselves to God as sweet-smelling burnt offerings, according to what I think has been rightly said: 'Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service' [Rom 12:1]. For all the time and without ceasing, from the beginning until the end, we offer to Christ the sweet fragrance through every virtue in the holy tabernacle, that is, in the Church."[27]

In offering the sacrifice of the virtues, or of our opening toward the infinite God in the Church—or in the "place" of our opening toward God's infinity in Christ and toward unity with the other faithful in God—we realize in a concrete way the unity of Christ's extended body, in which the endless love of the Persons of the Holy Trinity moves. This is a unity whose beginning was established by Christ through the Incarnation. The virtues are the forms and the degrees of our endless opening toward the Father and toward our fellow human beings through love in Christ, because it was in Christ that this opening was formed,

and it remains eternal. We open ourselves to the Father first through faith and then through obedience, self-control, patience, and humility—which are so many degrees of transcending our limitations—being borne by love and attaining the supreme and endless love. Through all these virtues we also open ourselves to the indefinable quality of our fellow human beings, and we intensify the unity with them in the infinity of the divine love that is placed at our disposal in Christ, the Son of God, who as man became accessible to us.

D. The Church Pneumatized by the Spirit of the Risen Christ

But the opening of these infinite horizons—those of coming to know the life in Christ, the head of the Church—is widened most of all through Christ's Resurrection and Ascension as a man and through our partial participation in these even during our earthly existence: "For in dying for us, rising, and ascending into heaven, Christ has widened, through the Spirit in a spiritual way, the hearts of those who receive Him."[28]

Properly speaking, it is the Resurrection and the Ascension that make the incarnate and crucified Word extend Himself, with His body and through His Holy Spirit, to those who believe and are open to Him; He thus becomes not only the potential head but the actual head of the Church. The Word of God veiled Himself at the Incarnation "even though He is present in all things. He veiled Himself out of economy, waiting for the time of His manifestation [through the body itself]. And the time of the manifestation to all was His Resurrection from the dead."[29]

Christ's Resurrection and Ascension with the body actualize, through His dwelling within us by the Holy Spirit, His quality as head of the Church. The Church thus begins her real existence especially through the fact that in Christ the head the Church community receives the beginning of the life eternal and perceives the endless perspective of this life in the body, even having a foretaste of this life. In addition to the unity whose foundation has been objectively laid through the Word's Incarnation and has been solidified through His sacrifice, through the Resurrection the Church receives the perspective and the pledge of resurrection and eternal life. The Church is

imprinted with the potentiality of resurrection not only in Christ's personal body, which dwells in her, but also in the being of those who constitute her as His mystical body. For their souls are filled with the power of the risen Christ's Spirit, who at the end of the world will enable them to bring their bodies back to an incorruptible life.[30] Their souls are filed with the power of Christ's Spirit; they are full of the powers of Christ's sacrificed and risen body, through the mysteries of the Church and through their lives, which are animated by the Spirit of the sacrificed Christ and by the power of His risen body. This has an effect on their bodies even in this life, an effect that will lead them to resurrection at the end of the world.

Properly speaking, the Spirit of the sacrificed Christ is the same as the Spirit of the risen Christ. By receiving the Spirit in this life, we receive the pledge of resurrection concomitantly with the power for self-sacrifice. Through this life of sacrifice that is sustained by the power of the sacrificed Christ's Spirit, believers advance toward their resurrection. Thus *the Church is the "place" where one advances toward resurrection; it is the "laboratory" of the resurrection. Her foremost aspect is the eschatological one.* By advancing on the path of sacrifice, or of death with Christ, the soul is filled with an increasingly greater power over the body, a power that will be manifested in the bodily resurrection. This means that the members of the Church advance toward their pneumatization, and thereby they advance on the path toward their resurrection with Christ.[31]

The Resurrection of Christ has brought to light the significance of His life of obedience to the point of death: it is man's liberation from himself and from the inferior powers, so that he might have the capacity for the endless, loving relationship with God. Thus we know that through our life of loving obedience, of sacrifice, or of forgiveness and growing in virtue, we advance toward resurrection. We know that by not being of this world—that is, by not being sinful—we belong to the Kingdom of the Resurrection. We know that by not having an abiding city on this earth, where everything is destined to die, we have the enduring citizenship in heaven (Heb 13:14). This is because the sacrificed Christ, who is imprinted in us, travels together with us on the path toward His Resurrection in us and toward our resurrection together with Him. *The Church is a pilgrim toward heaven because Christ is the way to heaven*, and He is the one who travels with her and within her

toward heaven. This does not mean that the members of the Church are inactive on earth, and the purpose of their activity is not only the preservation of the body, as if everything were to end with their death. But through their activity they lay the foundations for eternal communion with the Son of God who became man and with their fellow human beings. They also help others materially. In doing so they want to lay the same foundations for a love that will last forever. That is, they do not see only their bodies and those of others. They are not servants to corruption. They do not labor for something that is corruptible, as the Danaides labored by pouring water in a bottomless barrel.

Being in the Church or in Christ, believers do not remain indefinitely in the grave after death; rather, the Church leads them to eternal life. When they die they remain in Christ because *their death is neither complete nor definite*; their souls will continue to eternal life, and they will rise in Christ with their bodies, because *in the life to come their souls are in Christ, who rose with His body*. That is why the members of the Church do not live like those who have no hope (1 Thess 4:13), for Christ, as the incarnate and risen divine hypostasis of the Church, does not bear her in Himself in order to later leave her members in the earth at the end of their earthly lives but to take them first with their souls and then with their bodies too into eternal life, to the communion of the infinite Triune love in which Christ Himself is found as a man. Christ—the incarnate, crucified, and risen Son of God—is the eternal hypostasis of those who travel in Him or in the Church, through faith and virtues, along the road that He traveled during the course of His earthly life. And they know that they will rise again—and even participate beforehand, in their souls and bodies, which are members of Christ's risen body—to the Resurrection and eternal life of Christ. Christ becomes transparent to them and offers Himself partially as the risen Christ, through the cross that they carry in this life together with Him.

This pledge consists in the beginning of their pneumatization, which is not realized without the cross or without the Spirit, and also in the beginning of the actualization of a transparence through which they see Christ's infinite life and partake of it partially. This comes from the risen—and therefore pneumatized and made a subject to a maximal degree—body of the Savior, from the relationship with Christ that is greatly intensified due to this pneumatization and

accentuated subjectification of their bodies. Only because the Church is made up of such members on the way to pneumatization is the risen Christ willing to dwell within her; that is, only with a view to this pneumatization of her members—those who concern themselves with this fact, which is proper to the members of the Church in general—does Christ want to dwell in us, as in an adequate place or in a place on the way to becoming more adequate. For only through such a body is it possible for Christ's presence and glory to become transparent. "He did not consent to dwell in the temple made of stones that Solomon built . . . But He dwells in us through the Spirit . . . We did not partake of the Spirit before His descent, as the all-wise John says: 'For the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified' [John 7:39]. But after He rose from the dead and returned human nature to its divine image, He breathed first upon the holy apostles, saying, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' [John 20:22]."[32]

This pneumatization means the liberation or the power of liberation from the enslaving passions and from the laws of a nature that leads to the definitive corruption of the body. But it also means filial intimacy with the Father: "The divine Paul says, 'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father"' [Rom 8:15]. The spirit of bondage was in Israel, the Spirit of sonship in us . . . that is, in the Church of all nations there is the Spirit of God [leading us] toward adoption, providing a spiritual home for us."[33] If we are pneumatized we can see the pneumatized Christ's glory with our naked eyes; that is, we can see Him as transparent in one another or in the Church, because we ourselves are transparent to Christ. "And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:17–18).

The Church and each of her members are thus the burning bush, unconsumed by the inexhaustible fire of love that was brought to human beings in Christ's humanity. For the risen Christ shines forth from the Church and kindles her endlessly but does not consume her, He did and does the same with His human nature. "The flame spared the bush and became bearable for the weak and small wood. For the Godhead was comprised within humanity. This is the mystery of Christ.

The Word of God also dwelled within us, neither requiring punishments nor dispensing judgments but shining through good and gentle rays."[34] Christ shines forth with the gentle rays of His love, giving us courage to approach Him and to enter into a loving relationship with Him, even though this love is eternal—or precisely because of that.

Being borne by Christ, the community of those who are united with Him lives in the warmth of His love and in His light, in the light of His love for the believers who are in Him and in their love for Him and among themselves. This is a life on a different plane, on the plane of the all-luminous divine and endless life.

CHAPTER 3

CHRIST'S THREEFOLD MINISTRY AND THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE CHURCH

A. Christ's Priesthood in the Church

The Church endures and advances within the plane of the life that is nourished by Christ's holiness, deification, and Resurrection. This is not only because the Church has Christ within her as an incarnate divine hypostasis—and thus as a hypostasized body in God, one that is sacrificed and risen once and for all and shines forth from Christ the power for sacrifice and for advancing toward resurrection—but also because Christ Himself continues in the Church as the High Priest who continually offers Himself as a sacrifice, as the Teacher who propagates His teaching about Himself and about the salvation in Him, and as our supreme Leader toward salvation. Christ exercises His threefold ministry in His Church in the same way He did before establishing the Church. He is the head of the Church not only because He is the divine hypostasis that became humanity's hypostasis and because He remains in human beings with His sacrificed, risen, and ascended body, but also because He continues to exercise and to maintain in the Church His three saving ministries. To His identity as head there also pertains the fact that He leads us, enlightens us, and continues to offer Himself as a sacrifice in order to lead us through all these—through knowledge and a life of sacrifice—to resurrection and eternal life in Him.

As the divine hypostasis who bears our sacrificed and risen humanity, Christ is not passive in the Church but continues His work as Teacher, High Priest, and King. In this threefold ministry the Church is not an object for Him; rather, He addresses her as a free partner who is called to liberty and to a loving relationship with Him. For the Church is made up of persons who are endowed with freedom, who are called to freedom and everlasting love. In her role as a partner, the Church on one hand receives His teaching, sacrifice, and leadership; on the other hand she responds to them freely and positively, as to a calling. Thus the Church teaches, sacrifices herself, and leads, or participates in His ministries as Teacher, High Priest, and King. Through His continuing threefold ministry in the Church, Christ maintains a progressive dialogue with the Church and with each of her members, a dialogue in which neither He, nor the Church, nor her members are in a passive state. This is the meaning of the royal priesthood of the faithful, who are called to preach Christ's goodness and to avoid bodily lusts (1 Pet 2:9–11; 1 John 2:20).

The body of Christ, itself made up of many heads, is filled with the light coming from the supreme head and spreads this light by passing it to its members and to others who rise, through the participation in His sacrifice and teaching, to a life of sacrifice for the sake of God and each other. The Church submits to His leadership and makes it her own, and she leads her personal members in the same spirit of love; these in turn lead each other, teach each other, and encourage each other to sacrifice. Just as Christ is active in these ministries, so too is His Church active in partaking of them. Christ can remain passive only when His teaching, sacrifice, and leadership are separated from His Person; this happens, to a certain extent, in cases where Christ is substituted for something else, or where each member of the Church considers that he can teach and lead himself apart from others, without Christ as his unique Teacher and Leader. If Christ is the incarnate Son of God, then He is in and of Himself the light, the teaching, the sacrifice, and the leadership. In these ministries all those in whom He dwells participate in a unique way. In their unity of faith, understanding, and participation in the sacrifice, it is manifest that Christ Himself remains undivided in all, active as Teacher, High Priest, and King.

Christ continues to teach His Church. On one hand He enlightens her so that she might understand His words and His saving work

within the context of each period. On the other hand He makes her share in this ministry, exhorting her members from within—through the Holy Spirit—to teach each other. Even in the act of this exhortation, He is the supreme Teacher. For He encouraged the apostles to preach to all nations the original teaching, that is, His word and the word about Him. He then encouraged the missionaries of all times to make Him known to the entire world as the Savior. He encourages parents to make Him known to their children, and all the faithful to communicate to each other their faith in Him and to make clear the meanings of His Person and His saving work. The whole Church is taught by Him and is also a teacher through her participation in His teaching ministry. Those who gather more of the manna of His teaching or drink more deeply from the living water of this teaching are more generous with others.

St. Cyril of Alexandria says,

> We must fill ourselves with the divine gospel teaching. For in distributing His grace to all of us—both young and old—in the same measure and in nourishing all of us toward life, Christ wants even the strongest to harvest together with the others and to sweat for his brothers, offering them his hard work and making them share in the gifts from above. This is what the apostles were told: "Freely you have received, freely give" [Matt 10:8]. In gathering much manna for themselves, they strived to share it with those living in the same tent, namely, in the Church.[1]

He also says,

> Those who are not able to understand the perfect mystery of Christ on their own, or are not capable enough to comprehend Him on account of their weak understanding, will still partake of Him, but with the help and cooperation of those of the same faith. For through reciprocal instruction we can sometimes rise to views higher than those we ourselves are capable of.[2]

In the exercise of this teaching ministry, its prophetic quality is constantly brought into relief. This ministry takes us through the Church's preaching to stages increasingly closer to the man-model that is Christ and to the relationships of justice, brotherhood, and human sensitivity that will dominate in the heavenly Kingdom, where humanity will achieve its perfect form.

Christ is guiding us with power toward an increasingly stronger relationship with Him and toward union with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven, but He also gives us power to guide each other in this direction. In other words, He overcomes—together with us—the inferior and demonic tendencies that are intent upon keeping us away from Him by using all kinds of obstacles that are placed along the path of our effort to approach Him and to fulfill His will. He is King, but we too are called to partake of His royal power by overcoming these tendencies and obstacles so that we may reign together with Him, no longer being hindered by the chains of nature, sin, and death. "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim 2:12; see also 1 Thess 2:12; Heb 12:28; Jas 2:5).

Through His high priestly ministry in the Church, Christ endlessly presents His sacrificed body to the Father, but at the same time He also presents us as willing sacrifices of sweet fragrance from the power of His sacrificed body, of which we partake. Hence He offers the sacrifice not only for Himself—that is, He offers not only His personal body—but also His mystical body, within which His personal body is found.

In His case there exists a common identity between the one who sacrifices and the sacrifice. This means that His very Person is a willing sacrifice, that the sacrifice is the Person who sacrifices Himself; it also means that we cannot distinguish between the passivity of the sacrifice and the voluntary action of the one who sacrifices, that there cannot be a separation between the passive state of the sacrifice and the active disposition of the one who sacrifices. *The same Person is active as the one who sacrifices and passive as sacrifice*, or better said, as the receiver of the sacrificial state. The same Person, as the one who sacrifices, actively sustains His passive or receptive sacrificial state. He actively surrenders and actively sustains His passive or receptive offering state. The paradoxical combination between active and passive or receptive in the constant state of sacrifice—which is identical with the state of the one who sacrifices—means that in this self-sacrifice the one who sacrifices continues to actively sustain His offering, the fulfillment of the will of Him to whom He offered Himself; it means that He is entirely active in this self-offering that is in favor of Him to whom the offering is made, and that He is entirely for Him and in no way for Himself.

Christ also draws us to His state as the perpetual sacrifice and as the one who perpetually sacrifices. He does not sacrifice us as objects; rather, He draws us as subjects to self-sacrifice, to an active and lasting self-offering, thus making us share in His sacrificial state, in which He is a giver, not a passive object. By sharing in His sacrifice we partake not only of the sacrifice but also of Him who offers it. Thus we become not just sacrifices but also those who sacrifice, or priests of our own sacrifice, in this strict sense. Only in this way is our sacrifice offered as a sweet fragrance, because it is just like His: our very person is in a sacrificial state, a state of voluntary self-offering, of active preservation in a "passive" state of surrendering to God and to our fellow human beings, and of living exclusively according to their will. It is not only in the Church that we are present at His sacrifice.

Therefore on one hand Christ offers us as sacrifices together with His sacrifice in His quality as High Priest; on the other hand we offer ourselves to Him as sacrifices so that He may offer us to God the Father. By surrendering Himself to the Father and by being filled as man with the infinite love of the Father and for the Father, He also draws us into this state of surrender, but we also thereby offer ourselves, if we are not merely passive in it. We cannot offer ourselves as a sacrifice to the Father except in Christ. However, we must offer ourselves to the Father through the power of Christ; that is, we must offer ourselves together with Him. Therefore we must overcome the limitations of our egoism so that by offering ourselves to the infinite Father we may participate as partners in His love. Christ's power shines forth from His sacrifice like a magnetic power, drawing us also to our sacrifice. *Thus our self-sacrifice is full of Christ's self-sacrifice.*[3] Our sacrifice consists in a pure way of living, in prayer, and in other gifts to our fellow human beings in need and so that the Church's work in view of salvation may be maintained. Our sacrifice consists essentially in our self-denial so that we may enter into a loving relationship with the infinite God.

St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "All the time and without ceasing, from the beginning until the end, we offer sweet fragrance to Christ through every virtue in the holy tabernacle, namely, in the Church. For the smoke rising from the Lamb in the morning and evening is an image of Him who because of us and for our sake rises to the Father in a sweet-smelling fragrance, bringing along with Himself the life of those who believed in Him; He has the radiance of glory and of His Kingdom."[4]

Being penetrated by Him as our fundamental hypostasis, we are filled with His disposition as the one who sacrifices, and we are drawn into His act of self-sacrifice. "If Christ did not die for us, we would not have been received as a sweet fragrance offered to God the Father. But now that He has perfected Himself [as man] through His Passion, we follow Him immediately as a sanctified gift to God the Father, and we offer ourselves as a truly spiritual sacrifice."[5]

Christ is the permanent High Priest because He constantly intercedes before God the Father for our entrance through His state of surrender before the Father. He constantly intercedes for our entrance into His loving relationship with the Father, receiving us into this relationship and making us forget about ourselves, or about our limitation because of egoism, so that we may enter into the relationship of infinite love as partners of the Father together with Christ.

Our entrance into the presence of the Father is also our act: our surrender through the power of Christ's surrender. We are freed from ourselves and from our passions through the full freedom of our central subject. "For Christ is the true and great High Priest, the prescribed intercessor. As the divine Paul writes: 'For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father' [Eph 2:18; Rom 5:2]. Therefore, those who want to surrender [to be sacrificed or sanctified: καθιερούν] their soul to God the Father through Christ's intercession must be free of any stain."[6] They must be free of any thought or passion that limits them or prevents them from entering into the loving and infinite relationship with the personal God, and through Him with their fellow human beings.

B. Christ's Priesthood in the Church through the Universal Priesthood

In this way all are priests and sacrifices in the Church, all are teachers and guides toward their salvation and the salvation of other faithful who are close to them, even though not all have a formal responsibility for the Church community. "In the thinking of the Fathers, we are kings, prophets and priests, in the image of the three dignities of Christ. 'King by mastery over passions, priest in sacrifice of his whole being and prophet in being initiated into the great mysteries.'"[7] The personal prayers of the faithful, and the sacrificial life they live for themselves

and in their relationships with others, receive strength from the continual offering of Christ's sacrifice and from partaking of it.

This is made evident especially in the fact that, in addition to their individual prayers and their sacrifices offered on behalf of other persons in need, the faithful entrust some of these prayers and sacrifices to the person who offers Christ as sacrifice in order to add them to Christ's sacrifice, which is offered through the agency of that person.

C. Christ's Priesthood in the Church through the Serving Priesthood

But this sacrifice cannot be offered by every believer because, in such a case, it would not be manifested as being offered "for all"; everyone would offer it for himself. The sacrifice has to be offered by one for all, by one person who represents the one Christ who is offered as a sacrifice for all. This is the priest, the servant or minister of the Church, who is responsible for one community. This makes the believer aware that he needs Christ as intercessor. The priest symbolizes Christ as intercessor; he symbolizes the fact that the human being cannot enter by himself into the infinite, loving relationship with God.

Thus the general priestly, teaching, and royal ministry that is exercised in an individual way needs the Church's or the community's serving priesthood as its foundation.

On one hand, just as Christ did not take His priesthood from Himself, neither can the persons who are appointed to this serving priesthood take it upon themselves, nor can the community give it to them.

On the other hand Christ as intercessor intercedes to God the Father, with the purpose of obtaining as man God's forgiveness for men. As such He does not take His own priesthood from Himself but is appointed to His ministry as intercessor by God the Father: "And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' As He also says in another place: 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'" (Heb 5:4–6).

That is why he through whom Christ is symbolized, as a priest distinct from the believers, cannot take the priesthood upon himself, for in this case every believer would take it upon himself, and the truth

that the priest is called by God would not be upheld; also, the fact that the priest symbolizes Christ as their intercessor, as distinct from each believer and from all believers together, would no longer be recognized. Therefore the priest cannot receive his priesthood from the community either, because the community is made up of members who are not priests. The community as a whole, or as the Church, must recognize the fact that Christ in His quality as her head is something other than her quality as His body—that she needs Christ as intercessor—and this fact must be made evident through the priest as a servant and intercessor. Both the believers as individual persons and the community must refer to Christ as the intercessor who is distinct from them through the priests, who are not chosen as priests by the community but are chosen by God—just like Christ was—as visible images of Christ, or as His instruments.

As a way to activate Christ's invisible priesthood in the sensible plane, or the plane of His intercession to God, the priesthood is a gift from God. Believers are always in need of a visible priest who is distinct from them because they are always in need of Christ as intercessor. The human being does not snatch his salvation from God, as would be the case if he were to make himself a priest. Neither can the community snatch salvation in order to give the priesthood on its own. Just as Christ was sent by the Father to be an intercessor, so too are the priests and the bishops sent by Christ as the ones through whom He visibly fulfills His intercessory or saving work. That is why they receive Christ's Spirit from Christ, so that Christ may fulfill His salvific work. "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you . . . Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:21–23). Or: "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).

By rejecting the Church's serving priesthood, Protestantism has rejected the necessity of our partaking of Christ's sacrifice and thus the necessity of its constant offering in the Church, thereby also rejecting Christ in this sacrificial state. Christ, however, offers His sacrifice until the present time, and that is why He continues to send the ministers of this sacrifice. Through His apostles Christ called their successors—the first bishops—then through each generation of bishops He has called

other bishops, and through each bishop He has called the priests of the local Church that is shepherded by Him.

D. The Three Stages of the Priesthood

The apostles, as the witnesses to the risen Christ and as foundation stones upon which the Church was established, do not have successors. But as holders of the fullness of grace for the Church's entire saving ministry, they have the bishops as their successors in an uninterrupted succession. "The apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ [has done so] from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ."[8] Christ has transmitted to the apostles "all things that I heard from My Father" (John 15:15). Furthermore, those who succeeded the apostles, "being appointed bishops in various places, are in accord with Christ's decision."[9] According to St. Ignatius, they follow the apostles "as Christ follows the Father," continuing the apostles' work.[10] According to Clement of Rome, the apostles, by "preaching through countries and cities . . . appointed the first-fruits [of their labors], having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe . . . they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and afterwards gave instructions, that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry [their leitourgia, or liturgy]."[11] Thus "the bishops, the successors of the apostles, are considered partakers of the same priestly grace and of the same teaching of the Church and [are considered] her guardians as well."[12]

Every bishop is the successor of all the apostles, for every apostle was in communion with all the other apostles. Furthermore, every bishop is ordained by several bishops in the name of the entire episcopacy, receiving the same grace and the same teaching that all the apostles and all the bishops had; at the same time the bishop bestows upon the priests, and through them upon the believers in his eparchy, the same grace and the same unchanged teaching that is found in the whole Church.[13] Or rather, the bishop places the priests and believers in communion with the same Christ who, by offering Himself as a sacrifice to the Father, keeps His humanity in the infinitely loving relationship with the Father.

E. The Succession of Grace: Christ's Priestly Work Continued through Other Ministers

The uninterrupted succession of grace from the apostles does not only mean that the flow of grace, or of Christ's infinite love, comes from the past, from the persons who transmitted it horizontally through a chain of intermediaries. If the one who works through the agency of any minister of a mystery is Christ Himself, or if through that particular minister Christ Himself communicates His love for the Father and for those who receive the mysteries, then it is Christ Himself, found in heaven and in the Church, who communicates His love and who works in the bishops who ordain a new bishop. Grace also comes from above every time. Succession means that the same Christ who has worked, beginning with the apostles, in all the bishops until now also works through the prayers of the ordaining bishops upon the newly ordained, and that Christ will work through the mysteries that he will officiate as a bishop. Christ is a direct presence for the new bishop, but He was the same direct presence for the bishops of the past as well.

Christ invisibly chooses the bishops, the priests, and the deacons of all times in a direct and visible manner through a bishop, communicating to them the Holy Spirit or the infinite love for God and God's love found in His body. But He communicates all this to them through the prayers of the first apostles, and then through those of the bishops (for bishops: Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:1; for priests: 1 Tim 5:22; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; for deacons: Acts 6:5–6; 1 Tim 3:10; etc.). The intercession of the episcopal and priestly service always implies a dimension of the past, for it implies the continuity of the same Christ but also the living reality of those who through their faith transmit the grace of Christ's love. The believer in whom Christ works now through the mediation of a priest receives Christ through the mediation of the priest; in turn, the priest received grace in the past through his faith and through the mediation of a bishop who had faith. The believer receives Christ through the mediation of a priest who received grace from Christ, because he believes in Him and received this grace through the mediation of a bishop who also believed in Christ. Time, along with its succession, is included in the very fact that grace is received through the agency of a person who already has grace, believes, and prays. Grace comes through the mediation of persons who, along with transmitting this

grace, also transmit their faith to us, through the Holy Spirit. Thus we also receive from the apostles, at the same time as the succession of grace, the succession of faith. The priesthood as the objective intercession of Christ, who Himself became and remains an objective intercessor, includes the present actuality of Christ's work, the current work of the same Christ who has worked during all the past ages of the Church.

The serving priesthood, which makes Christ's sacrifice present for us in a certain time and place so that we may partake of it, means that Christ continues to be the High Priest who is identical with His sacrifice. One cannot separate Christ's voluntary sacrifice from Christ Himself as High Priest or as objective intercessor.

Protestantism rejected the objective reality of Christ the High Priest or the intercessor, a reality that makes His saving work continually effective and that offers the faithful the possibility to partake of it. In the Protestant conception salvation depends entirely on individual human subjectivity. According to the conception of Western Christendom, Christ's intercession has been exhausted on the cross, as in a purely juridical and therefore sufficient act, and so there is no further need for it. It now falls exclusively on us to believe that the intercession on Golgotha has in fact settled the difference between God and us.

Through his serving priesthood the priest is not exempt as an individual person from the necessity of prayers for himself, as for all the faithful. By offering Christ's sacrifice for the community and including in it the prayers for the faithful, he also includes himself among them by removing a particle for himself too during the *Proskomidia*. In addition to this, he asks other priests to pray for him during the Eucharistic service. In his serving priesthood he includes his individual sacrifice and prayer, and in this way his unity with other priests is manifested. Should he not carry out his priesthood worthily, or if he neither prays nor offers the sacrifice for himself, he puts his personal salvation at risk.

Such is also the case for bishops. In order to preserve the unity in the Church, it has been established ever since the time of the apostles, based on the Savior's commandment and the practice of the Church from the beginning—even based on the example of the Savior, who also had a wider circle of disciples beyond the twelve apostles—that the priesthood in Christ be exercised on three levels: bishops, priests, and deacons.

F. The Serving Priesthood's Role in Maintaining the Unity of the Church

If the priest maintains a unified liturgical community by gathering all of its members with their prayers around the Lord's sacrifice, the bishop maintains the unity among the priests of a local Church by representing Christ before a larger community, thus maintaining the Church in unity within a certain territory. By representing Christ in the larger community of the Church, the bishop ordains the priests within its territory. Then, through the communion that each bishop has with all bishops—a communion that begins with the ordination of a bishop by several other bishops as representatives of the whole Church—the unity of the whole Church is maintained.

But the bishops too, as human persons, are still included within the community as members of the body of Christ, because they are saved within the body of Christ. The law of communion is valid for them too. Therefore the relationship between the priest, the serving bishop, and the community cannot be reduced to a single formula. The bishop is both a mediator of Christ and a member of the Church as the body of Christ. *No bishop separates himself or becomes an exclusively visible substitute for the unique head, Christ.* That is why Christ has left the communion of the apostles as the Church's visible leadership, and after them the communion of the bishops as successors of the communion of the apostles; He has not left only Peter and his successors. In this way the bishop is incorporated not only into the community of the Church but also into the communion of the episcopacy, within which there is a strong connection. Every member of the Church, even the bishop, is saved as one who is dependent on Christ and on the community of the Church, because the same Christ exists in all the members of the Church, uniting them as His body in the infinity of His love for the Father and the Father's love for them. That is why a bishop is ordained by several bishops as representatives of the entire episcopacy, and therefore by Christ in His quality as head of the whole Church; Christ mediates His work for the Church through the agency of the whole episcopacy, through the agency of all the priests in communion with each other through the bishops.

The relationship between the priest or the bishop and Christ also cannot be reduced to a simplistic formula for another reason: Christ

Himself is the one who serves the Eucharist through the priest or bishop. In the Liturgy Christ is both sacrifice and minister. As such He is not, properly speaking, sacrificed by the bishop or by the priest; rather, He sacrifices Himself. He "is broken but not divided,"[14] and He offers Himself to those who take Communion "by [His] mighty hand."[15] The transformation of the gifts into the body and blood of Christ is effectuated through Christ's Spirit, but the Spirit is sent by Christ, who is present together with the Spirit. Although it is desirable for the spiritual strengthening of the faithful that the priests and bishops should have an exemplary spiritual life—that is, they should offer themselves as a sacrifice together with Christ, because Christ Himself brings and offers His body and blood for the entire Church community through the agency of the priest and bishop—Christ does not, however, make His offering in the mysteries dependent upon the priest's or bishop's worthiness. The priest's or bishop's unworthiness is not Christ's unworthiness, nor is it the unworthiness of the Church as Christ's body, which is in the infinite, loving relationship with God. St. John Chrysostom says that Christ "works through all [priests and bishops], even if they are unworthy, in order to save the people."[16] Christ thereby places Himself in a direct relationship with the believing people, or rather, He is in a relationship that He intensifies even through the actions of unworthy servants. It is interesting that even those who would have more independence from the Church's ministers in their relationship with Christ are that much more scandalized by the ministers' unworthiness; therefore such persons give a more important sense to intercession than it really has. The intercession must be considered more as something that occasions Christ's gift, as a transparent medium for it, than as a personal appropriation of Christ's gift by the minister and the gift's transmission in such a way to the faithful.

G. A Detailed Explanation of the Bishop's and Priest's Relationship with Christ

Therefore the priest's intercession is not the same as a substitution for Christ's; the priest has not become another Christ. Christ's power works through the agency of the priest, or better said, through his action—which, properly speaking, is not his but the Church's—without this ac-

tion being transformed into the priest's power. But Christ's power does not come through the priest as if through a passive channel; on the contrary, he must pray so that he may participate, through his prayers for others, in what is happening. Because the definition of the priest is given as one who offers prayers to God on behalf of the people, making their prayers his own and sending them to the altar above, St. Gregory of Nazianzus says that he is "co-servant (συνιερεύσοντα) with Christ."[17] Prayer again shows the human being to be one who prays for others, like Christ, but who has efficacy in his intercession due to Christ's intercession. Christ wants to make use of this praying human being in order to work out our salvation. "There stands the priest, not bringing down fire from Heaven, but the Holy Spirit: and he makes prolonged supplication, not that some flame sent down from on high may consume the offerings, but that grace descending on the sacrifice may thereby enlighten the souls of all, and render them more refulgent than silver purified by fire."[18] That is, so that grace may fill them with enthusiasm for the love of God in the same way that it filled Christ as man.

Why did God choose a certain person so that through that person's prayers, accompanied by the community's prayers, He may bring about the descent of the Holy Spirit? Because He had to choose one in order to make evident Christ's ministry as our objective intercessor. He can choose anyone, on the condition that he believes and prepares for this ministry.

Thus, even though he brings about Christ's work through his prayers, the priest remains a human person who is also in need of salvation; he remains human to such an extent that he prays more then others, with the consciousness that the saving work effectuated by grace is not his, but that it belongs to Christ's Spirit. He is aware that because of his human insufficiency it is Christ Himself who works in the officiation of such great mysteries; far from boasting, he offers his prayers and sensible actions, through which Christ invisibly fulfills His saving work, with a more dreadful fear than that of any other believer: "Lord, extend Your hand from Your dwelling place on high, and strengthen me for Your service which is set before me; that standing blameless before Your dread altar, I may perform the sacrifice without the shedding of blood" (prayer at the beginning of the *Proskomidia* from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom).[19]

The priest experiences a double consciousness—that of the divine power that Christ Himself exercises through him and that of his human unworthiness—during the mystery of confession, in which the superhuman power of forgiveness of sins is exercised through him. That power, however, is not his: "And what priests do here below God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of his servants. For indeed what is it but all manner of heavenly authority which He has given them when He says, 'Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained?' [John 20:23]. What authority could be greater than this? 'The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son?' [John 5:22]."[20] Only by emptying himself of all pride, through humility, does the priest sensibly receive the coming of God's power into him, and through him it passes with the same sensibility to others; thus in his inner self the priest or the bishop also becomes a mediator of Christ's grace. In this way the priest or bishop lives in communion with those who receive this grace, or the infinite love of Christ, who wants to unite all with Himself and among themselves. If the priest does not experience with extreme humility the awe of the divine act that is celebrated through him, he somehow remains outside of this communion of the other faithful with Christ, namely of the faithful who receive Christ through him. In this way the faithful benefit more from the priesthood of the priest than the priest himself benefits.

The fact that Christ's power is exercised through him but independently of his worthiness does not mean that the priest has to arbitrarily use the power that is being exercised through him, even if he is unworthy. But he must endeavor to identify his judgment and attitude toward the faithful with Christ's, not thinking that he can identify Christ's with his. In this sense it is Christ Himself who pronounces the judgment through the priest. In all its attitudes human subjectivity must be identified with Christ's objectivity in the mystery of confession and with Christ's meekness and humility. It must be completely conformed to Christ's judgment and attitude, or better said, be deepened in Christ's love for human persons, or, further yet, become a fitting instrument for this love, always conscious that it is not this ocean of love itself.

The priest must seek to conform himself as fully as possible to the reality of Christ's love through his very acute responsibility as a servant to the loving Master of all, who showed us the ways in which He

wants to save us. This responsibility brings again into bold relief the subordinate state of the human priesthood and also our salvation's dependence upon Christ the intercessor. For Christ the intercessor is motivated by His supreme responsibility for souls before the heavenly Father, and this responsibility nourishes the responsibility of the visible priest of the Church, given that he is responsible before the Father for fulfilling Christ's responsibility for the faithful. This makes Christ's quality as intercessor or mediator between the Father and us, as well as the priest's quality as Christ's intercessor, even more evident.

The Holy Fathers closely link the teaching and pastoral, or directive, ministries with the priestly ministry through which the mysteries are officiated. The laypeople can teach and exhort each other, but the responsibility for enlightening the entire community with Christ's whole teaching belongs to priests and bishops. It is through teaching that the mystical body of Christ is defended against disbelief from the outside. "Wherefore it should be our ambition that the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. For it is not for one kind of battle only that we have to be prepared. This warfare is manifold, and is engaged with a great variety of enemies."[21] Or, according to St. Gregory of Nazianzus:

> For the guiding of man, the most variable and manifold of creatures, seems to me in very deed to be the art of arts and science of sciences. Any one may recognize this, by comparing the work of the physician of souls with the treatment of the body . . . The one labors about bodies, and perishable failing matter, which absolutely must be dissolved and undergo its fate . . . The other is concerned with the soul, which comes form God and is divine, and partakes of the heavenly nobility, and presses on to it.[22]
>
> For if all men were to shirk this office [that is, the priesthood], whether it must be called a ministry or a leadership, the fair fulness of the Church would be halting in the highest degree.[23]

The greater part of St. John Chrysostom's and St. Gregory of Nazianzus' treatises on the priesthood covers the priest's duty to teach. For this, one needs an assiduous preparation, great travail, and a continuous preoccupation not only with studying but also with the cleansing of sins. "A man [priest] must himself be cleansed, before cleansing others: himself become wise, that he may make others wise; become light, and then give light: draw near to God, and so bring others near; be hallowed, then hallow them; be possessed of hands to lead others

by the hand, of wisdom to give advice."[24] One can see here what kind of teaching the priest and the bishop must give: the teaching through which they lead the people to God, to a pure and loving relationship with Him. This requires a great knowledge of, and a great love for, the human being. The whole teaching that the priest offers must refer to the human person's relationship with God, or that of God with the human person; it must seek to intensify this relationship and to prepare the human person for it, helping him to purify himself of passions, egoism, and everything that places limitations on him and closes him in on himself and in this world. It is a theandric teaching that seeks the realization and deepening of the relationship between the human person and God, leading up to their union. For this is the teaching that saves, the teaching that guarantees eternity for the human person in relationship with the eternal God.

If the teaching and leading ministries are strongly connected to the officiation of the mysteries, because the human person's progress toward God cannot be accomplished except by the coming of the Holy Spirit as God's power, then one bishop cannot have jurisdictional primacy and infallibility in the field of teaching without this primacy being supported by a special mystery—that is, without the right to exclusively officiate at certain mysteries, or without a supremacy in the officiation of certain mysteries. By not having the exclusive right to officiate certain mysteries, or by not receiving in a specific way a distinct grace through a special mystery, the bishop of Rome cannot decide issues of teaching, or of Church leadership, for himself. In fact, in the New Testament there is no case in which Peter, of whose alleged primacy the bishops of Rome avail themselves as his alleged successors, gives orders to the apostles. On the contrary, we see St. Paul giving advice to the bishops that he appointed, Titus and Timothy.

H. The Synodality of the Bishops, and How the Church's Sobornicity Depends upon It

Because the bishops' right to officiate the mysteries is equal and because the ordination of each is celebrated by several bishops who are in communion, the bishops' decisions on issues of teaching are also made in communion. For teaching is not a field for its own sake, but through it Christ's saving work in the Church is expressed—a work

accomplished mainly through the mysteries. The exact subject of the preaching, and of the explanation of the teaching about Christ's saving work, is Christ Himself, through the Holy Spirit. However, Christ teaches through all the members of His mystical body because in all of them the meaning of this work and its character operate and are illumined through the levels of the hierarchy; this illumination is based on the celebration of the mysteries, and even more specifically on the episcopate in actual communion with the entire body of the Church. *For Christ as High priest and Lamb, as Teacher and Shepherd, works in the whole body through the visible mediation of the hierarchy.*

The shepherding work of the priests and bishops is prevented from being transformed into acts of domination when the ministry as shepherd of souls (as leader toward salvation) is kept closely connected to the ministry as officiator of the mysteries or to the ministry as the one who sacrifices and the sacrifice through the power of the high priesthood of Christ, who is also a sacrifice (the Kingdom of the slain Lamb). This would have also prevented the bishop of Rome from withdrawing from the interdependence of communion.

Leadership as shepherding souls toward salvation is always a service; it has a spiritual character, because it comes from the Holy Spirit, together with the grace of priesthood. Just like the other priestly ministries, it seeks nothing but the salvation of the faithful, or to place them in an eternal, loving relationship with Christ and with each other. It follows the example of the Savior, who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (see Matt 20:25–28).

The Holy Apostle Paul considered himself a "servant" or "minister" (διάκονος), a "brother," and a "co-worker" (1 Cor 3:15; 3:1; and 3:9); he did not want to "have dominion over [the] faith" of the faithful who "have been called to liberty" and have ceased to be "slaves of men" (2 Cor 1:24; Gal 5:13; 1 Cor 7:23). That is why he used the power the Lord gave him "for edification and not for destruction" (2 Cor 13:10). The bishop in particular must never forget that "he who is called to episcopacy is not called to dominance [*ad principatum*], but to the service [*ad servitutem*] of the whole Church."[25]

Today, the progressive Catholic theologians (Hans Küng in particular) interpret the papal primacy as "primacy of service," and the pope agrees with this external embellishment to the face of primacy.

It is in this sense that he would like to interpret the word of the Lord: "Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave" (Matt 20:27). So the pope "desires" to be the first, because he declares that he is the servant of all in an exclusive way. But in these words Christ exhorts everyone to be the first when it comes to service; this is not the privilege of a single person. The effect of this service to others is communion and—in the case of the episcopacy—synodality, in which everyone desires to be interdependent and to take into consideration the judgment of others, even when it comes to service.

The Church in her totality as the body of Christ is infallible because Christ is infallible, and He exercises His threefold ministry in the Church as a whole. It is the Church as a whole that shares in His infallibility, because she shares as a whole in His threefold ministry. The episcopacy makes infallible decisions on matters of faith precisely because these are made in the name of the Church and in an inner relationship with her, taking into consideration the thought of the Church regarding her life in Christ. The episcopacy can do this because the decisions are made in communion. This communion assures not just each bishop but also all the bishops against dictatorial ambitions in the Church. Each one and all together are limited in the exercise of their right to decide on matters of faith by their reciprocal dependence. They are also limited by the fact that together they seek an accord among themselves that is in accord with the Church's tradition for all times, because they impede each other from any ambition for domination that one or another may try to manifest. The history of the Orthodox Church proves that the practice of synodality has protected her from any change in matters of faith, as well as from the chaos of individual opinions that is found in Protestantism. Neither in Catholicism nor in Protestantism was the living tradition of the Church—her practice of the sacramental and spiritual life—normative. In both of these Christian formations in the West, individual and rational speculation that was disconnected from the life of the Church was prevalent. At the Ecumenical Councils the bishops always signed a dogmatic decision based on their Churches' faith and sacramental life, a faith and life that had been inherited through tradition. The dogmatic formulas were the concise expression of this faith that was practiced or lived in the Church. That is why these formulas were able to be included in the hymns and prayers of the Church.

I. The Serving Priesthood and the Visible Character of the Church

The priesthood with its three levels is so necessary to the Church that without it she "cannot be called Church."[26] In fact, without the threefold ministry of Christ continued through visible instruments, there is no Church. This uninterrupted ministry nourishes the Church and keeps her united and active, because Christ Himself remains in the Church and impresses Himself as intercessor upon her consciousness, hence as the one who must have His own image as visible intercessor in the servant of the Church. We have seen that through the members of her hierarchy as our objective intercessors before God, Christ's objective intercession is made active in a visible way.

The Son of God took on our body and became like us, showing that we cannot obtain salvation on our own through subjective states, which can deceive us. Christ activates this objective and nondeceptive mediation through the visible mediation of certain persons so that our salvation may not be dependent on subjective, uncertain sentiments. Thus the priesthood is a confirmation of the Word of God's real Incarnation as our objective mediator before God. If Christ became a visible man to show us that He is both on our side and on God's side, why would He not make use of visible instruments from among us who would mediate on Christ's behalf the power that is not from men, just as Christ as man mediated for us the divine power, which did not come from His humanity? If the priesthood is the confirmation of the real Incarnation of the Son of God as man, its negation places the meaning of the Lord's Incarnation in doubt. It is not without reason that in some Protestant schools the denial of Christ as God incarnate is common enough.

Strongly connected to this, the denial of the priesthood also places in doubt the fact that salvation includes in its scope our bodies as well; this doubt is again connected with the weakening of belief in the Son of God's Incarnation. Through the Son of God's Incarnation and through the priesthood, God takes into consideration the fact that we also have bodies and cannot be saved as true human beings if the Son of God did not work through His own body and if He does not work through our bodies as well. But the works that originate from within His body do not have an effect on our body except through the mediation of the

sensible acts performed by visible persons, or by priests as embodied images of Christ the Savior, now that Christ's body is no longer within the visible plane because of its pneumatization.[27]

At the same time, the denial of the priesthood means the denial of the Church as the objective place of salvation, the place into which we are integrated along with our subjective experience and upon which the real value of our subjective experiences is founded. Our communion in Christ is shown in our visible gatherings as well; therefore the grace of Christ—who wants to gather all of us in His love and among ourselves—or His infinite love for us is also shown in our visible gatherings, that is, in the Church, as communion among ourselves. It is not without reason that the denial of the serving priesthood on the part of certain confessions has also led to the weakening of the visible Church in favor of an invisible Church; this denial has also led to the disallowance of the efficacy of Christ's salvation on our bodies, a disallowance that again has its premise in the weakening of the faith in the Son of God's Incarnation, or in the weakening of the relationship between the Son of God and the human nature that some members of such confessions still profess that He assumed.

Certainly, the Church is not only visible. Without Christ and without His Holy Spirit, there is no Church. Even the saints and the angels are in a relationship with the Church, and the visible Church cannot be conceived of without them. Precisely because we believe in a visible Church, we believe in the real presence within her of the incarnate Christ and of His Holy Spirit. The Church's invisible part is only one aspect of the whole visible part. However, the Church's visible part is extended in the invisible, and with its divinity the invisible penetrates the visible. The visible is a sensible image of the invisible; it is filled with the invisible. Properly speaking, the visible acquires a new significance in the light of the invisible. It becomes to the eyes of faith a vessel for the invisible.[28] The invisible somehow becomes visible through the Church's visible part, because many things in the Church appear transfigured (such as the bodies of spiritual persons). But we believe that even those things that do not appear transfigured are transfigured through the effects they have on the faithful (such as the blessed water, the Eucharistic bread and wine, etc.). Therefore the visible is transfigured in the Church as something more than visible, but without being dissolved as a visible object. In this way the Church's objective is

a pneumatic objective and as such is not just for our subjectivity; its pneumatization is not reduced only to immanent causes. The mysteries are not purely visible acts, or acts invested with certain imaginary powers only by our subjectivity, but in them there are divine powers that are independent of us, whether or not they are experienced as such by our subjectivity. The divine power in Christ is also extended to those visible elements of the cosmos to which the believer's life is connected, so that through them Christ may penetrate into this life. In their visible makeup the mysteries are also present in the visible acts through which they are officiated, being filled with the work of God. But then again, the ministers must also be selected by God through a visible act established by God and filled with the power of God.

Those who deny the Church's visible and objective character and the invisible divine work within her deny the Church herself and place salvation in the uncertainty of a pure subjectivity. "For if no one can enter into the kingdom of Heaven except he be regenerate through water and the Spirit, and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord and drink His blood is excluded from eternal life, and if all these things are accomplished only by means of those holy hands, I mean the hands of the priest, how will any one, without these, be able to escape the fire of hell, or to win those crowns which are reserved for the victorious?"[29] Nothing holy exists or is performed without the priest in the Church. Thus there is no Church without the priest. "For if God works nothing through [the priest], you neither have any laver [of baptism], nor are you a partaker of the sacraments, nor of the benefit of blessings; therefore, you are not a Christian"[30] without the priest.

Through the priestly ministry, or the ministry as mediator of grace, with which one of our fellow human beings is invested—as well as through the importance that the Church thereby receives in her quality as the objective, divine-human reality, or as the body of Christ that is not reduced to our subjectivity—our fellow human beings and communion with them receive a great significance in our salvation. This is based on the fact that the Son of God became our fellow man in order to bring us salvation, or the infinity of the divine love. Only in this way does the importance of our human person receive its worth.

Reduced to a pure subjectivity that is changing and capricious, I am no longer sure of myself if I no longer mean anything for anyone else. I know that I exist and receive the assurance of salvation and eter-

nal life because the Son of God became man—my fellow man—and because He unites me with Himself, not individually and not working within my purely subjective interior but within the "body" of believing humanity, which consists of souls clad in bodies. He thus places me in a new light and gives a sure consistency to my reality, which is constituted of soul and body, and is activated and realized through relational acts with other human beings. I became real to the maximum degree in Christ, because all are real in Him and because we are real together. And we are real together because some of us are priests, or mediators of the incarnate Word, who is the Mediator; we are real together because some of us are chosen by God in order to unite us, through them, with the Word of God, who Himself became man, or the supreme "mediator" between us and God, because He also remained God.

CHAPTER 4

ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed presents the Church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. These attributes derive from the Church's theandric constitution as the body of Christ, who is one and holy. "These four attributes and dimensions of the Church are strongly united among themselves and somehow intermingled. Therefore, none of them can be understood without the others, but each one presupposes the others and undividedly coexists with them."[1]

A. The Unity of the Church

The unity of life in the same Christ. Unity belongs to the Church's constitution as the incarnate Word's extended body. For the Lord became incarnate, was crucified, and rose from the dead as a man in order to gather in Himself those divided, to gather them in the infinity of His love for the Father and of the Father's love for Him. This unification of all in Him constitutes the very essence of salvation. For this unity means unity in the blessed and infinite God. In fact, unity is not possible outside God, and thus neither is salvation. Christ extends Himself in us through His sacrificed and risen body, so that He may unite us and make us like Himself; He fills us with the same love that He has for God the Father and that God the Father, who is in Him, has for Him.

And this is the Church. Being filled with this love, the Church is also the loving unity among her members.

Thus only inasmuch as the Church is one does she represent the place and the efficacy of Christ's saving work, or the effective fruitfulness of this work. "For it pleased the Father . . . by [Christ] to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col 1:19–20), that is, through His boundless love, through which He gave Himself wholly to the Father and to us. "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:22–23). In the Church Christ's desire to see us united with Him in love is fulfilled; likewise, in Him is fulfilled the wish that the entire human race have love for the Father, the wish that the reasons of the whole creation be returned to Him actualized. He wants "that they also may be one" (John 17:21): one in their love for Him and for the Father, and one in their love for each other. St. Maximus the Confessor identifies the Church with the union of all in the incarnate Word, who is with the Father and also within us "like the yeast in the whole dough." We are all called to be gathered in Him, "like the members of the body with the head," through the architectural work of the Spirit of Him who fulfills all things in all persons.[2]

Where Christ is, there is unity, because where Christ is, there is the Love who wants to embrace all persons in Himself and to present them to the Father. Therefore unity cannot be obtained except by being rooted in Christ, the Word of God who has become accessible to us through the Incarnation so that He may gather all of us in His unity. Division is the sign of having left this unchanged and unique foundation, the sign of attachment to changing and varied transience as to the only reality. Division is the fight of all against all for individual and temporary things, the fight of the one against the many in order to seize as many of the things to which they are entitled as they can. But he who lives in Christ as God—in Him who became accessible to us through the infinity of love that encompasses all of us—feels that he is rooted in Him and united with all others; he feels that he is in his own house together with all those who are also rooted in Him, as in the same house, which is theirs as well.[3] He who feels that he is in God even during the course of his life in the world no longer feels lonely,

because he knows that the world belongs to God and that the world has become transparent for him; through its transparence he sees God, he sees the reasons or inner principles of things gathered in an undifferentiated unity in Christ, the divine Logos, with whom he is united.

He who has Christ in himself feels that he is in the depths of his being, not on its surface but resting on its foundation, and thereby on its foundation that is held in common with that of others—that is, in the divine Logos. In the Church he feels that he is established upon Christ, as on "the chief cornerstone." In Christ he feels that he is built together with those who believe in Christ, as in a dwelling penetrated by Christ and inhabited by Him. He who does not feel united with others in Christ is himself not in Christ either. "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God [in complete intimacy with God], having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2:19–22).

He who feels that he is in the tide of the incarnate Word's power and love, in His unending wave of life and light, cannot but feel Him as the source of the same life and power that are found in all those who open themselves to Him through their will and thus through their faith.

The creator and sustainer of the Church's unity is her founder and head, "who united us with Him and united Himself with us and became like us in everything" in such a way that "he who looks at this new world in the building up of the Church sees in the Church Him who is and who became all in all"—namely, Christ, "who gathered into unity those lost and scattered, and has made out of all a single Church, a single flock."[4]

The Holy Fathers perceive the foundation of the Church's unity in the presence of the same sacrificed and risen body—and as such the body filled with the infinity of the divine love—in all the members of the Church. St. Athanasius says that the Church is one because she is built on the foundation of Christ's body, which is "the firstfruits of the Church," because she is the extension of Christ's body and therefore identical with Him,[5] or the extension of this body's love and purity.

And because Christ's body is filled with the Holy Spirit—who shines forth from Him as a unifying energy that gives life and holiness, in contrast with the separatism of egoism—the Church's second foundation is the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Fathers. Properly speaking, they present Christ's body and the Holy Spirit as an undivided duality that produces, sustains, and promotes the unity of the Church. The unity between the Church and Christ, as well as the unity within the Church, is nourished by the unity between the Son and the Father: "That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us" (John 17:21). The Church lives in the ocean of love between the Persons of the Holy Trinity. Just as the three Persons of the Holy Trinity cannot be separated from their loving unity, so too the Church cannot be separated from God, nor the members of the Church separated among themselves in the profundity of their being.

The body of Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, comes continually into the Church and into each member as an always new wave of love; it comes on the basis of these members' voluntary act of partaking of Him. Their unity in the Church is maintained and continually strengthened through this partaking. That is why the Eucharist, as a common partaking, has a great significance for the preservation and strengthening of the Church's unity. The Church is maintained as one through the common partaking of Christ. But because Christ has been in the Church since the apostolic age through this common partaking and through the descent of the Holy Spirit, He comes on one hand from heaven, and on the other hand He is in the Church. Thus only where the Church is, is there the Eucharist; and only where the Eucharist is, is there the Church also. From the beginning until now, the Church has Christ in her quality as a community that believes in Him and constantly partakes of Him, just as the community during the apostolic age believed and communed, preserving the continuity of the same faith and Eucharist. For every time the members of the Church receive Christ, the Church thereby continues to be nourished by the same Christ. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9). "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). Becoming partakers of Him through the Spirit, we

are united with God the Father through Christ.[6] St. Ignatius of Antioch says, "*One* is the body of the Lord Jesus, and *one* is His blood shed for us; one is the bread offered to all, and one is the cup given to all."[7] Therefore the Church is also one. The Church is Christ, who presents Himself to the Father with His sacrificed and risen body, having in Himself all of us who believe in Him, because we partake of Him. St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "For Christ does not present only Himself to the Father, but He also presents in Himself all of us who have fallen from His countenance on account of our disobedience."[8]

The Church is the place in which Christ always offers Himself as an offering of sweet fragrance to the Father, and through Him we too offer ourselves by the fact that we partake of Him: "Because at all times and without ceasing, from the beginning until the end, we offer through Christ the sweet fragrance through all the virtue in the Holy Tabernacle, that is, in the Church. For the smoke rising from the Lamb [Num 28:1–8] in the morning and in the evening is again an image of Him who because of us and for our sake rises toward the Father with a pleasing odor, also bringing along with Him the life of those who believed in Him, who have the hope of the shining glory and of the assured Kingdom, as well as the joy of eternal delights."[9]

But the Eucharist is not the only mystery through which the unity of the Church is maintained and strengthened. Through the Eucharist the unity among the Church's members is perfected; however, they cannot approach it from the outset. They have to advance toward it, as if on a ladder, through other mysteries—baptism and chrismation—and if they fall into sin, through the mystery of confession. Through all these mysteries the human person is united with Christ, who is found in the Church. Through baptism he is received into the Church because he is united for the first time with Christ, who died for all of us and who dies to Himself and overcomes death in the Church so that her members may also die to themselves—that is, to egoism—and thus may overcome death as the ultimate consequence of the weakening of the spiritual life through egoism: "Christ was sacrificed for us, and He was the same both in death and above death, 'being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit' [1 Pet 3:18]. But Christ makes us pure, sanctifying us through holy baptism . . . And being purified, we are united with the saints and become coinhabitants with them in the holy and venerable sanctuary. Thus we enter in the house of God, but

not yet into the higher places. The baptized receives only the earnest of the Spirit."[10] That is to say, through baptism we enter into the union with Christ and through Him with God the Father, but we have not yet reached the fullness of this union. Nevertheless, as those who have entered through Christ into the household of God, we have entered into the Church, even if we have not advanced toward the innermost places. Generally, we have entered into the house of God, which is the Church.

Thus the foundation of the Orthodox Church is Jesus Christ Himself, whose sacrificed and risen body is found deep within the Church. The unity of the Church is an ontological unity, or better said, a supra-ontological one. In Catholicism this kind of inner unity has been weakened because through the mysteries one receives only a created grace, not grace as uncreated energy in which Christ Himself is found.

In Catholicism this weakening of the union with Christ through the mysteries led to the elevation of the pope as vicar, or locum tenens, of Christ. Obedience to the pope has thus become the means by which the unity of the Church is maintained in a more juridical or institutional way. Protestantism, unhappy with such a nonspiritual and rather external unity of the Church, has reduced the relationship with Christ to a simple relationship of the believer with Him through faith. But because this faith does not have its source in Christ's bodily presence in the Church, to a great extent it has become devoid of power and content, becoming more like a voluntary, subjective act with a much reduced content decided upon by each individual.

Faith is not absent in the Orthodox Church either. However, it is not faith in what the bishop of Rome says about Christ—a faith not present in the hearts of the faithful and in the Church—or in a Christ who exists only in heaven and who consequently is far removed from any possible experience of Him; rather, faith in Christ is experienced in His effective presence in the Church through His assumed, sacrificed, and risen body. This kind of faith is centered on Christ, keeps believers attached to Christ, and gives them the experience of His objective-pneumatic reality; believers receive from Christ, who is present in His sanctified and risen body, the power for a life in which they strive to die to sin, to advance in virtues, and to have a foretaste of the resurrection in their souls.

The unity of the Church is not a unity of institutional order, nor is it divided by individuals with different faiths or with various interpre-

tations of the faith. Rather, it is a unity of ontological-pneumatic life in Christ and in His Holy Spirit. This unity with and in Christ is not based only on the affirmation of a common faith that may have a subjective character; instead, it is experienced in the identical power that comes to the believers and the Church from Christ, who is found in the Church. Believers experience the faith with the same power, which is given to them for a life of purity. As the efforts for such a life increase in intensity, so does the experience of the power of Christ's Spirit. Even those who do not make serious efforts toward purity experience Christ's power in the holiness of the other members of the Church. They also experience it in answers to their many prayers in the Church, and in the Church's prayers themselves.

From this point of view, the Orthodox theologians Karmiris and Meyendorff, as well as the Western theologian H. Schultz, are right in saying that the foundation of the Church's unity is not from below, from the accord of the believers, but from above, from Christ. However, one cannot draw from this fact, as they do, the conclusion that the divisions of Christians into different Churches are only superficial and do not affect the basic unity of the Church.[11]

The unity in preserving the same dogmatic faith as an expression of the experience of Christ. The faith of the Church, which expresses the conviction about this presence of Christ working in the Church and in her members, is not separated from a certain experience of this work of Christ. It is in this experience that the dogmas have their unshakable character. That is why the unity of the Church is a dogmatic unity: because it is a unity based on the same experience of Christ working through the Holy Spirit in all parts of the Church and in all her members. *The Response of the Eastern Patriarchs* to the Anglican nonjurors rightfully declares that the economy practiced by Orthodoxy never refers to dogmas: "For in the divine dogmas an economy or a dispensation never takes place. They are unshakable and are observed by all the Orthodox with all piety, as they cannot be ignored."[12] For the same reason, in Orthodoxy one does not make the distinction between primary and secondary dogmas, just as one cannot take the less important materials out of a building without the entire building collapsing. *The Response of the Eastern Patriarchs* continues, "He who ignores the least part of the dogmas condemns himself as heretic and brings anathema

upon himself, being considered by all as a schismatic and heretic, and is excommunicated."[13] Tarasius, Patriarch of Constantinople, said, "It is the same thing to commit sin against dogmas both small and large, for God's law is nullified in both cases."[14]

In accord with this and quoting from St. Basil the Great, J. Karmiris observes, "No distinction is allowed between dogmas because the dogmatic faith constitutes a unique and organic whole, out of which if we attempted to tear out and throw away those considered 'small' and 'not having great power' according to everyone's arbitrary judgment, we would no longer observe among them the important dogmas and would bring harm to the faith or, better said, we would reduce preaching to an empty pronouncement."[15]

In fact, if the dogmas of the Church express the experience of Christ as present and working in the Church, and if the unity of the Church in the dogmas means this unique experience of Christ, then ignoring the dogmas not only means weakening the Church but also reducing the content of the faith to a sum of subjective interpretations of a Christ about whom one has heard—a Christ who remains at a distance—instead of identifying those dogmas with the experience of Christ found in His integral working, through the Holy Spirit. In this case, the preaching of Christ is not backed up by the experience of His power, but rather becomes a sum of theoretical interpretations, speculative and devoid of power.[16] If the dogmas express the experience of all Christ's works in the Church, refusing some of the dogmas is tantamount to refusing, or to not being aware of, some of Christ's works in the Church and therefore to removing some of the fullness of Christ's efficacy in the Church and in her members; this means that Christ no longer has full saving efficacy in the Church and in her members when the recognized dogmas no longer represent the experience of Christ's works, or when they represent only the experience of some of His works. The unity of a solid faith, based on the inner experience of all Christ's works by the whole Church, is strongly connected to the guarantee of salvation that is obtained through the Church.

If the Church's dogmatic faith and her unity are the expression of the experience of Christ's full saving presence within her, then these dogmas cannot become an object of negotiation, as is the case with a faith that is considered as a simple interpretation of a Christ found at a distance.

Because the dogmas are the expression of the experience of the complete saving power of Christ, who is present in the fullness of His work within the Church, *the unity of the Church consists also in her unity in the mysteries and in her investiture with a unitary hierarchy that celebrates all the mysteries without discrimination* and that preaches the same dogmatic faith. Properly speaking, only when the mysteries are unitarily celebrated by the members of the three priestly ranks is Christ, who is present in the Church, a reality experienced in His work in a unique and complete manner. The mysteries are the dogmatic faith applied, and at the same time they sustain the dogmatic faith. *The full dogmatic faith and the totality of the mysteries form one whole.* Only together do they keep the Church and the faithful within the environment of the saving work and eternal love of Christ, who is one of the Trinity become man. The Church is one because of her unity in all three aspects: in *dogmas* that express in ideas and words the faith in Christ's presence in the Church; in *worship* that, through the mysteries it comprises, communicates the work of Christ, who is present in the Church; and in the *working* of the hierarchy that celebrates the mysteries and preach the faith in Christ's presence at work in the Church.

Regarding matters of relations with various Churches, in organizing her actions within the context of various life circumstances and within different nations or groups of believers that are determined by their traditions, the one Church may take the form of autocephalous Churches with their own statutes, regulations, and forms of action. But in dogmas, in mysteries, in the hierarchy that preaches the dogmas and celebrates the mysteries, the Church is one. Only a Church that is one in dogmas, in mysteries, and in hierarchical organization and communion is a Church that is truly *unitary*; only the one that maintains these three aspects without fail is the *unique* Church.

The Church is *unitary* because, having Christ working within her, she is truly His extended body; that is, she is fully united with the head and fully united within herself. A Church that does not have Christ within her in this full and intimate manner, and that considers that Christ is so distant from her that she needs a vicar, is not fully united with Christ, and consequently neither is she fully one within herself in the innermost way—not to mention the total lack of unity in a Church in which Christ is even more absent and in which an experience of the

whole Christ does not exist, but only a faith that to a great extent is inconsequential for life, a faith that is interpreted in as many forms as there are individuals. In such a case one does not confess a visible Church, and if there is no visible Church, then a real Church cannot exist either. If the members of the Church do not know each other, they cannot be consciously united among themselves, nor can they develop this unity. The Church, however, is the union of those who believe in Christ, not certain individuals' union with Christ apart from the others.

At the same time, the Church, in the sense mentioned above, is the *unique* Church in the full sense of the word "Church." For the Christian formations that do not have Christ intimately dwelling within them can be neither the body of Christ nor His bride. In addition to this, Christ cannot have more than one body organically extended from His personal body, nor more than one bride. Any full union of the faithful with Christ can only mean His intimate, full, and working presence within them. And only this union represents the Church in the full sense of the word.

But then the question is raised: What are the various Christian denominations that do not confess such an intimate and working presence in them of the full Christ? We consider that they are incomplete churches, some closer to fullness, others farther away from it.

Contrary to Metropolitan Platon, who considers that all denominations are equal partitions of the same unique Church,[17] the spirit of the Orthodox teaching and tradition compels us to consider that the non-orthodox confessions are partitions that were formed in a certain relation to the full Church; they exist in a certain relationship with her, but they do not partake of the light and of the full power of the sun, which is Christ. Consequently, in one way the Church comprises all the confessions separated from her because they could not be completely separated from the tradition present within her. In other words, the Church in the full sense of the word is the Orthodox Church.

The entire faith is, in some way, objectively included in the rays of the same preincarnate Logos—and thus in the stage of the Church before Christ—and is called to become the Church of Christ. Both objectively and subjectively, the whole of humankind, composed of different faiths, knows the preincarnate Logos to a certain extent. Objectively and subjectively, other Christian confessions know Christ, but not

fully. Those confessions have in this way gained in part the quality as churches of Christ, being called to their full realization as the Church of Christ.[18]

St. Gregory of Nyssa calls the Church "you who have slipped and fallen into sin. You were tripped by the serpent and fell to the ground in disobedience."[19] St. John Chrysostom speaks of the Church as "pulled downward,"[20] "blemished, arid, enslaved, empty, soiled with blood . . . the servant of demons, subject to straying."[21]

Even today a certain church subsists outside Christianity, due to the fact that there still exist certain ontological relationships of the human forces among themselves and with the divine Logos. This church exists all the more in other Christian formations, given their relationship with Christ the incarnate Logos through faith, and given that they partly have a common faith in Christ with the Orthodox Church, the full Church.

If the ecumenical movement strives to reestablish the unity of the Church, it must strive toward the most intimate presence of the whole Christ within the faithful. And the most intimate degree of Christ's working presence within the community is confessed and experienced by the Orthodox Church, which has preserved the early Church's tradition of life. Christianity cannot achieve the unity of the Church except by achieving unity as Christ's body, united in a maximum degree with the head, or in a relationship of supreme union with Christ—a relationship proper to His bride. Without accepting this intimate unity with Christ, the unity of the Church within herself cannot be achieved either, for the Church is a unitary body and the unique bride of Christ.

In the present situation of ecclesial incompleteness within the various Christian denominations, the question is raised: Are their members saved? Or, in other words, is there salvation outside the Church, which is nothing other than *one*, in the full sense of the word?

This question cannot be given a simplistic answer.

Within the different Christian confessions, there are many believers whose Christian life has not been reduced to their particular denomination's official doctrinal formulas. The ancient Christian tradition was stronger than the doctrinal innovations brought about by the founders of these denominations and sustained officially until now by those formations and their theologians. In Catholicism, for example, the mysteries are even today practiced along with the conviction of the

faithful that through these mysteries they are intimately and directly united with Christ, and that Christ is therefore working within the Church. These convictions persist even though Catholic theological theory has given Christ a locum tenens and conceives of the salvation brought by Christ as accomplished through the simple satisfaction that He gave to God on Golgotha; or this theory declares that the grace received in the mysteries is a created grace, not an operation springing out of the uncreated divinity of Christ and not the extension of this uncreated divinity into the being of the faithful.

However, a second factor needs to be taken into consideration: the believers of various Christian denominations found themselves inadvertently within those denominations that have faith in a Christ who is not present in them with His entire saving efficacy. Their incomplete participation in Christ—and this is, to a great extent, not their fault—may consequently result in an incomplete participation in Him in the life to come as well, in conformity with the word of the Savior: "In My Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:2).

Without a doubt, the heretics are at fault. Without deepening the inherited faith to any degree, and being more driven by the passion of pride, they proceeded to tear Christianity apart—and this produced a great evil.

B. The Holiness of the Church

The sacrificed Christ, source of the Church's holiness. The holiness of the Church is strongly connected with her unity. For the more united the Church is with Christ and thus within herself—that is to say, the more intimately she is united with her head, who is holy—the holier she is in her quality as His body. Sin, which is the opposite of holiness, is at bottom a sin against unity.[22] The holiness of the Church and of her members flows from the union with the Lord's sanctified body through obedience and sacrifice. The holiness of the Church and of her members is the form in which we see manifested their strong union with Christ, who was sanctified through His sacrifice for us although He was already without sin due to the hypostatic union.

This means that the holiness of the Church, just like her unity, has its source in Christ, who is holy and who is present within her. Where there is a direct and intimate relationship with Christ, and in Him with

the other faithful, there is holiness. In Protestantism, in which the faith in Christ's intimate and working presence in the Church has been weakened, the holiness of the Church—along with her unity—has also been weakened to the point of disappearing. Concern for the holiness of the body through abstinence has also been greatly weakened in Catholicism (see, for example, the absence of fasting, eating before Holy Communion, and so forth), due to the lack of emphasis on partaking of Christ's sanctified body in the Church, and generally due to the similar reduced emphasis on the importance of Christ's body and His holiness, as well as our body's importance in the work of salvation.

The Church's holiness and unity, which derive from the strong union with Christ, are attributes in which Christ's saving power is manifested through the Church. Salvation cannot be obtained without participation in Christ's holiness, which works in the Church. If salvation is participation through the transparence of the body in the divine infinity in the Holy Spirit, who spiritualizes our bodies, one understands why some Western denominations that avoid any effort toward spiritualizing the body conceive of salvation as a juridical solution to the conflict between God and human beings, as a purely formal solution that will bear fruit in the faithful's existence in the life to come.

Christ is holy because, above all else, He is God. Holiness is an attribute of God. The created being does not have holiness except through participation. That is why when participation in Him is not affirmed, the created being's holiness is not affirmed either (as in Protestantism). Wherever God is manifested, one experiences His holiness as something that is completely different from the world, but something that communicates the energy of grace with a view toward purification—as a feeling of awe, of veneration, or of man's fear before God on account of his own sinfulness, which hinders his full participation in His holiness (Isa 6:5–7; Exod 3:5). The Old Testament constantly speaks of God's holiness, but also about its communication. Holiness fills the place where God appears; it shines through the persons close to Him and leaves its mark upon these persons after God has come near to them.

It is with this holiness that, through the Incarnation and His sacrifice, the Son of God has filled the human nature He assumed, raising it onto the divine throne and guaranteeing its life, together with its eternity, from the divine infinity. Because Christ is in the Church

with this nature and because He abides in the faithful, holiness, salvation, and the eternal divine life are communicated to them. Holiness is communicated from His body through His Holy Spirit. Through His pneumatized body His holiness is being endlessly communicated to us in the Church, as is the power to become ever holier, ever more open to God's purity and eternal love, and free of any egoism that is opposed to holiness.

Holy Scripture often speaks of Christ's sanctification as a man. He calls Himself "Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world" (John 10:36). In other places in Holy Scripture, the following is said about Christ: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38); and "Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed" (Acts 4:27). He is God's "Holy One" *par excellence* (Luke 1:35). From His holiness there shines forth the holiness of the Church, which is His extended body, or in which He Himself is found with His sanctified body. For it was for the holiness of the Church that He sanctified His body by offering it as a sacrifice. In fact, self-sacrifice as surrender to God means sanctification, given that he who sacrifices himself renounces everything that separates him from God and thus is united with God, who is holy. In this way holiness can be equivalent to complete love for God, having its source in God's holiness as His unlimited love for us. Holiness is perfect love, which consists of the union between persons as persons who are not confused in an impersonal unity but united in complete respect, through which they want to maintain themselves as such for eternity. Holiness in this sense can only come from God. It is in this sense that Jesus was sanctified as man, being filled with perfect love for God from God's perfect love for His humanity, and through it for all of us. "Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb 13:12).

St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "For the entire visible and invisible nature partakes of Christ. The angels and archangels and those above them are not saints in any way except through Christ in the Spirit. Therefore He is the altar, the incense, and the High Priest. He is also the blood for the cleansing of sins."[23] That is, in Christ the endless love of God meets the love of humanity that is open to this love by totally surrendering to God. He is the one who as God communicates His divine, infinite love, but He also offers it to God as a man by to-

tally surrendering to Him on our behalf, as our High Priest, so that by being filled as a man with the divine love—to which He completely opened Himself—He may transmit it to us, so that in this way He may sanctify us.

Christ's state of sacrifice as a man is a state of love for the Father and for us, because only love for another person causes a person to renounce himself. This is the sweet fragrance of Christ's sacrifice before the Father. "As He did in the beginning, Christ has established again in Himself, before the Father, the man who departed from God through disobedience and a multitude of sins."[24]

Therefore, holiness as a state of sacrifice before the Father is a state of love from the Father's love. Because God's love is infinite and eternal, and as such gives our love this quality, God gives us eternal life by making us holy in Christ. By making us holy God makes our persons eternal and emphasizes their eternal value. In the Church we partake of this state of holiness in Christ and thus of the love between us and God, and this is the force that maintains the Church or her members in unity. "You understand, therefore, that we are saved through Christ, who died for us, but we also offer ourselves to God the Father as a sweet fragrance by surrendering ourselves to Him and leading a life of holiness."[25] Before His Passion Jesus Christ spoke of His sanctification through His sacrifice for us out of love, showing that He wants to extend this sanctification to the Church: "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth" (John 17:19). The Holy Apostle Paul says, "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (Heb 10:14). Or again: "Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Eph 5:25–27; see also 1 Cor 6:11; 1 Thess 4:3). Here St. Paul makes a strong connection between Christ's love and His sacrifice, by means of which the Church is sanctified. Holy Scripture also speaks in many places about the extension of Christ's holiness in those of us who believe and are united in the Church. The first sanctification of those who believe in Christ takes place at baptism, through which they are united with Christ and among themselves in the Church. For in baptism "you were washed . . . you were sanctified . . . you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus

and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:11). Then, by living under the power of grace, the baptized form "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people" (1 Pet 2:9). All who belong to Christ are "called to be saints" (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2), "saints in Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:1), "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor 1:2). Because Christ has come to dwell in the Church with His sanctified human nature, the Church is thus holy and sanctifying, having within herself the source of graces and gifts. But the Church also receives them through prayer, because the same source—that is, Christ—is above her in His quality as her head, as her ultimate head because there is no other head, because Christ is the ultimate source of holiness and love. The Church is holy because the Holy Spirit is present in her prayer and prays with power; that is why through prayer she receives in an increased measure the Holy Spirit, who "sanctifies all things" of which the believing human persons partake and who also sanctifies them within the Church, bringing them together even more as the Church.

As an attribute of the Church and of her members through participation, holiness first of all consists of purification from sins and of the power to remain holy and to advance in a life of virtues; this is none other than the positive and progressive expression of purity and love. In purity all the aspects of spiritual perfection are included: abstinence, moderation, patience, wisdom, humility, meekness, goodness in thoughts and deeds, and love for all. It is readiness for communion with God through prayer, and with our fellow human beings in prayer for them and in mutual help. The Church and her members have all these aspects of holiness.

By defining holiness as a loving relationship with God, we emphasize the fact that purity and all the virtues connected with it are not yet the essence of holiness. Holiness is first of all a supernatural brilliance of God, displayed through those who strive toward these virtues; it is a shining transparence of the divine life. "The light of the Holy Trinity shines all the more" through those who strive, writes St. Gregory of Nazianzus.[26] The saints bear the image of Christ as the one who through His humanity communicates the Holy Trinity's holiness and brilliance, or the perfect love from within the Trinity's bosom.

The Church is the laboratory in which the Spirit of Christ makes us saints, or ever-fuller images of Christ, in whom the Holy Trinity's holiness and love are concentrated, as they are in a person. This is due

to the activity of the Holy Spirit, who at the same time maintains in us the active concern for holiness. The Church's main concern is the sanctification of her members, because only in this way are they saved. The Holy Spirit works toward the sanctification of the faithful within the Church, whose intimate life is imprinted with Christ's sanctified body—a body that the Church bears in her bosom and from which the Holy Spirit shines forth. The Church works toward this sanctification of her members as she maintains them in the movement of love and of their communion with each other.

On the threshold of their entrance into the Church, human persons are sanctified by Christ as He integrates them through baptism—or through His Spirit working in baptism—into the body of those who are united with Him; that is, He unites them with Himself. Hence they have their quality as "saints," being "washed" of the original sin and of the sins they have committed up to that moment, because they have been helped to decide to desist from their egoism, from their life outside the infinity of Christ's love and outside the love of the Church community. On the basis of their faith—or on the basis of the faith of those who vouch for their faith that is to be actualized, and thus on the basis of their potential faith—Christ has been imprinted at baptism upon their nature with His human nature; and His is a nature that is sacrificed, sanctified, and free of the original sin, of any other sin, and of any tendency toward sin. Unlimited in His infinite love by any egoism due to sin, Christ has been imprinted in their faith, or in their openness toward Him as an *élan* of their response to His infinite love. The chains of the original sin, which limited them and kept their will in the slavery of this limitation, have been broken by the overwhelming love of Christ, who strengthens in them the movement of response to His love; this has cleansed them of the original sin of their limitation and has imprinted in them the dynamism for the life that is not limited by sin, the life in the milieu of Christ's love. Christ, who as a man died to any potential for sin, or to any possibility that His humanity would be prevented from attaining to the infinity of divine love, has been imprinted with the power of this infinite love in the one who has been baptized, in that very moment causing him to die to sin and to desist from its limitation and bondage.

But the possibility of moving freely in the infinity of God's love through Christ—a possibility that is regained by the desire to fight

against sin through Christ's Spirit—has to be actualized in deeds not only by Christ or by His Spirit, who dwells in the baptized person, but also by the baptized person himself. Thus holiness is not only a gift but also a mission, a responsibility for the Church's faithful. Holiness implies in itself eschatological tension, or the tension leading toward the perfection of the life to come; this tension is also implied in the Church's unity with God and among her members, which is a unity leading toward the eschatological perfection, toward which the Church also tends. "The dynamic tension [in the Church] between the 'not yet' and the 'already now' is inherent in the mystery of the Kingdom which both precedes and anticipates its fulfillment."[27]

Pentecost: the starting point and eschatological tension of holiness. This is how the Holy Apostle Paul describes the tension between holiness as a gift and holiness as a mission with an eschatological perspective: "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin" (Rom 6:4–7). By advancing in the holiness that we have gained, we advance toward resurrection. Through holiness the Church is a pilgrim toward heaven, just like her faithful members.

Holiness has a dynamic character; it is not a static attribute. He who believes in Christ is dead to the past. He is in a forward tension and lives neither for the past nor for the present but for the perfect, eschatological future, which is something that makes the present a step forward toward a more perfect future. But he is still active in the present, and even in the best possible way, because he cannot advance to higher levels if he does not pass through each present level in such a way that he would not be influenced to stop there or even to fall back to the levels he has already passed. The sacrifice or the death with Christ is thus a permanent work in Him; in order to help him in this work, Christ transposes Himself in a state of permanent sacrifice that is not static but dynamic. The imprinting upon us of Christ, who is sacrificed and raised, is therefore a dynamic imprinting.

The cleansing from the original sin, and thus the will's liberation from its slavery—as well as the indwelling of Christ's freedom and of its power, which is capable of maintaining the human person in a constant movement toward the good—is such a mysterious event, one so hidden in the depths of our being, that it is not made evident except in its manifestation in acts of our will. We know on our part only the full intention to die to sin and to live for Christ. But our death with Christ proves that the cleansing from the original sin was made effective in baptism through the encounter with our intention to die Christ's death and through this cleansing's activation after baptism. St. Mark the Ascetic says,

> You could understand that this is about the cleansing mystically produced through baptism but which is found effective (ἐνεργως) through the commandments. If in baptism we were not liberated from the original sin, it is evident that we cannot perform the deeds of freedom either. If we are able to perform these, it is evident that we are mystically liberated from the slavery of sin, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" [Rom 8:2]. In disobeying the commandments of Him who has cleansed us, we are borne by sin.[28]
>
> Grace is first given to us mystically in the universal Church through baptism, [and it] thus dwells hidden within us. Then, this is revealed to those who believe, inasmuch as the commandments are fulfilled, together with the rational hope.[29]
>
> Therefore, you who have been baptized in Christ, offer your work, for which you have received power, and hasten to receive the manifestation of Him who dwells within you.[30]

Christ remains always available to us, on the basis of the decision made at baptism to die to sin and to live with Him, for as long as we do not revoke that decision. But, as in any personal relationship, the work or the manifestation of love must be effectuated continually on both sides. Only by continually affirming our attention to Christ through deeds do we come to rejoice in everything He potentially gave us, which we did not know beforehand.

Therefore all the Church's faithful are mystically holy even from the moment of baptism. But the Church is also holy because through her, or through the believers' trust in her, they become holy. If their

holiness were to remain hidden, not manifested in deeds, her holiness would also remain hidden. But their holiness is manifested within her through the subsequent powers received from her or within her. It is in this that the holiness of the Church is manifested. Thus the holiness of the Church is also active. It is a massive ladder in motion that raises all and on which all climb; on this ladder each one is at a different level of holiness, at a different nearness to God, and penetrated to a different degree by His light and love according to the measure of each one's efforts, which are sustained by Christ's power manifested through the Church. Those at a higher level bring to light all the more the holiness of the Church, or of Christ, who sanctifies the Church. Not even the highest level exhausts the Church's reserves of holiness and of sanctifying power—or, better said, of Christ dwelling in the Church, which is the medium for transmitting God's fire of infinite holiness. Christ and the Church are glorified through all because the holiness of His body is activated through all. In this sense the Church is "the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23). "He who sees the Church sees Christ who builds and increases [the Church] by the addition of the saved," says St. Gregory of Nyssa.[31] Without a doubt, this distinction between levels does not create separations between the members of the Church, nor does it create divisions in Christ, just like the various stages and attributes that children have and the place they have in their mother's heart do not create divisions in her. On the contrary, she keeps them in unity among themselves. Christ is being built up through the thoughts, feelings, and good works of those united with Him in the sense that He can actualize, as a call and response to their self-fulfillment, more and more reserves from the ocean of His power and love. In addition to this, the spiritual wealth of those on the highest levels, because it is a wealth of humility, is also beneficial to those on the lower levels. No saint exhibits his holiness, nor does he make it a barrier in his communication with others. On the contrary, his openness toward others grows proportionally with his holiness. The humility of the saints is so accentuated that they do not even want to know their holiness, and thus they do not know actually it, but it is known only by God and by those with eyes pure enough to see it, who benefit from it themselves. It is so hidden that the other faithful have to make great efforts to grow in their own holiness in order to know it without becoming envious. Additionally, the faithful

who are spiritually more advanced are dominated—to a degree corresponding to their own elevation—by a love for other people, and this is manifested in their prayer for others and in works of humble service that are intended to go unnoticed, so that those being helped are not humiliated by these works.

Baptism is the personal Pentecost of each person who enters the Church, and through baptism each can begin a new road and has become a "new creature" in a movement of continuous growth: "After Pentecost the time of the Church is oriented towards the *novissima*, the new things of the Kingdom . . . Christianity, in the radiant witness of its confessors, martyrs and saints is messianic, revolutionary, explosive. The Gospel calls for the violence which seizes the Kingdom, tears open the heavens and transforms the old image of the world into the new creation . . . The salt of the earth and the light of the world, the saints appear as the obvious and hidden leaders of humanity, those who will assume responsibility for history and accomplish it . . . The saints take the torch from the martyrs and continue to illumine the world."[32]

With Pentecost a new era has begun in the collective life of the world. The members of the Church in general concern themselves with the forgiveness of sins, the elimination of divisions and differences among people, and the increasing of love, and they press forward toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

This varied picture of the efforts toward holiness in the Church explains why the Church cannot make a strict separation between saints and sinners, and why she does not deprive the sinners—except those who contest her teaching—of communion with her, which is the very norm of the efforts toward holiness. The Church never knows whether a sinner will abandon his indolence and will engage in climbing the ladder by repenting of his sinful life. In any case, the Church wants to always make available to him Christ's reserve of power and love, which is found within her; she does not want to deprive him of even external communion as an opportunity to deepen this communion into an internal one. In fact, as long as a sinner wants to remain in the Church, he does not remain in a purely external communion with her, but through his willingness to remain within the Church and thus in relationship with Christ, who is found in her, he also remains in a certain internal communion.

Those found on the various rungs of the ladder of holiness have reason to not be satisfied with the level on which they find themselves, because they are not perfect. From this point of view, it seems that no one has reached, or considers himself to have reached, perfect holiness before death; that is why the crown of holiness that is officially recognized by the Church is not given to anyone before death. Imperfections, shortcomings, mistakes, and small sins are found on many of the highest levels. It is very difficult to say where a life completely without such imperfections begins, or if such a life even begins for any member of the Church, as long as he has not surpassed the movement toward the infinity of Christ's love and holiness and has not entered into the rest found within that infinity of love and holiness.

This does not mean, as one may perceive from what has been said, that all persons in the Church are the same; it especially does not mean that, given the inability to reach perfection in this world, we should become indifferent toward sin or believe that any effort is in vain because it does not raise us in even the smallest degree from sin to any degree of holiness, as Protestantism holds. This is one of the reasons for the paradoxical way in which the Holy Apostle John speaks about the state of Christians, declaring on one hand that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin," and on the other hand that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:7–8).

We have to be in a constant tension in order to overcome sins as much as possible by striving to decrease the mistakes we make and confessing the sins we still have and still continue to commit. We solve this antinomy through confession: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). St. John Chrysostom says that God often writes down our sins, but through His mercy He erases them just as often.[33] He takes our sins seriously because He writes them down, or is cognizant that they are real. But He also takes into consideration our repentance for them. For in repentance we overcome our self-enclosure, and we enter into loving communion with Him; therefore the sins actually disappear, certainly because Christ's grace or love comes to meet us. But we must not sin intentionally, thinking in anticipation that Christ will forgive us through repentance. This would mean that we had become accustomed to not taking repentance seriously. This would mean that

we were not pushed to the sin that we committed only by our real inability but also by a lack of respect for God, in that we thought we could take advantage of His mercy. God takes into consideration our real inability, not our pretended inability. Christ offered His sacrifice for our inabilities, not for our intentions to take advantage of this sacrifice insincerely in the state after baptism, when in large part our inabilities have been healed, as Christ has come to dwell within us with His power.

Paul Evdokimov says, "The Church is holy with the holiness of Christ (Eph 5), and as the source of the sacraments and of sanctification she actualizes the communion of saints. Always in the struggle against the heresies of Montanism and Donatism, the Church presents the precise and clear understanding that she is not a society of perfected saints, of only the elect and the pure. Her mystery consists in being at one and the same time 'the Church of the repentant, of those perishing' (St Ephrem) and the communion of sinners with the 'holy things' [the sacraments], of their deifying sharing in the 'one and only holy One.'"[34]

Thus a distinction is made between the Church and her members, although on the other hand she encompasses them: the Church is constituted of those who transcend and of what is reached through continual transcendence. The Church has, in this case, the sense of what is reached through transcendence. In the depths of her being, she is the holy spring for her members; she has Christ, the holy one, imprinted in her. She is the pool of Bethesda that heals the sick and does not get infected with their microbes but dissolves them: "The Church even on earth does not live an earthly life but a divine and happy one. That is why she majestically calls holy not only each of her members but herself also in her totality. Her visible manifestation is comprised in the sacraments, her inner life, in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in faith, hope, and love. She is never disfigured and does not need any improvement."[35]

C. The Integral Sobornicity of the Church

Sobornicity as a unity of persons in complementary variety. The Slavic translators of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed have rendered the Greek term "*catholiki*" as "*sobornuiu*" out of resentment toward the

church in the West and probably also because the sense of "universal" given by that church to the term "*catholiki*" does not faithfully transmit its meaning. For the same reasons, the Romanian translation adopted the Slavic term, naming the Church "*sobornicească*" ("synodal").

The meaning of this term is closer to that of the word "catholic." It expresses the synodal mode of preserving the Church's teaching at the episcopal level, but also the general communitarian mode of putting that teaching into practice. The whole Church is a permanent synod, a communion, a convergence, and a permanent cooperation of all her members, for only in this state is her spiritual treasure preserved and valued. In our time this general synodality is expressed through the idea of communion, which implies complementarity.

If through the attribute of unity the fact that the Church is one is simply affirmed, then through the attribute of sobornicity we see what the nature of this unity is. It is a unity achieved and maintained through the convergence, communion, and unanimous complementarity of her members, not through a simple attachment or through a melding of all into one uniform whole. Therefore synodality or sobornicity implies the sense of the Church as an organic-spiritual whole, and thereby it comes close to the true meaning of the term "catholic" without expressing it directly. That is, synodality or sobornicity expresses the position and complementary work of the Church's members as in a true body, not her cause, which the term "catholic" expresses.

A direct rendition of the meaning of the term "catholicity" could be offered by the terms "wholeness" (ὅλον) and "plenitude." The Church is an organic whole, an organism or a spiritual body, a plenitude that has everything. And this everything, this plenitude, is present and efficient in each of her members, acts, and parts. This understanding of the Church makes clear her sense as the "body" of Christ, and it corresponds to the definition given by the Holy Apostle Paul as "the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23).[36]

In accord with this understanding, the Church has the whole Christ, with all His saving and deifying gifts; the same is true for every local Church, and even every faithful person has the whole Christ, but only inasmuch as he remains in the "fullness" of the body. Just as in every cell of a body there is the entire body with its work and specificity, so is the whole Church found in each of her members or parts and thus so is Christ, but only because that particular member or part remains

in the Church. The members are not thereby made uniform, but they are complementary due to the fact that the life of the entire body, or Christ Himself, is actively present in all through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit who enlivens the Church's prayer prays within me, and at the same time the Church also prays with me and within me, and I in the Church. Not only the Church on earth prays with me but also the saints, the angels, and the Mother of the Lord. "The fiery Cherubim, the many-eyed Seraphim, Thrones and Dominions, Principalities, Angels and all the Archangels and holy Powers, together with the blessed Forerunner, with the Prophets and Apostles, with the blessed Hierarchs and all the righteous, pray for us so that we may receive mercy!" (Canon for All Saints). "We pray in the Spirit of love, knowing that no one can become blessed except through the prayers of the whole Church where Christ dwells, knowing and believing that as long as time is not fulfilled, all the members of the Church, both the living and the dead, are unceasingly perfected through prayer."[37] Every believer is surrounded by the unanimity of the Church. No one is alone; everyone is in this unanimity. It is a perfect unanimity of persons in which every person is preserved without being nullified, in which every person receives power from the whole body and contributes with his specificity to the whole body's richness and life.

The Holy Fathers clarified the idea of the Church's presence in every member by developing the Holy Apostle Paul's vision on the various gifts of the members in the body of Christ, gifts that come from and are sustained by the Holy Spirit. In every believer, in addition to his distinct gifts, there is the same saving grace, the same indwelling of Christ through the Holy Spirit, but only inasmuch as he is connected to his parish. And within the parish all the gifts of the faithful are developed in solidarity, but only in relation with the bishop and his eparchy, and thus with the whole Church.

St. Basil the Great affirms directly that the Holy Spirit is "wholly (ὅλον) present in each [person] and being wholly everywhere."[38] But He is wholly in every member through a gift, or through various gifts; the members seek each other out and cooperate among themselves for the preservation of the entire body and of every member individually:

> "But God has set the members in the body, every one of them, as it has pleased Him" [cf. 1 Cor 12:18]. But "the members have the same care for one another," [v. 25] according to the inborn

> spiritual communion of their sympathy. Wherefore, "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" [v. 26]. And as parts in the whole (ἐν ὅλῳ) so are we individually in the Spirit, because we all "were baptized in one body into one spirit" [cf. v. 13].[39]

Sobornicity as communion and plenitude in the Holy Spirit. Even though as members we have distinct functions and gifts, because we have them from the same Spirit and we live in the same Spirit and in the same organic whole of the Church we have a common sensibility, or everyone experiences the sensibility of the whole. The Spirit of Christ does not bestow upon each member of the Church all His gifts in isolation, just as at creation all the qualities were not given to everyone in isolation. In this case there would be no communion. Everyone receives everything within the framework of the whole, and so everyone enjoys everything but in communion. Far from reducing the personal life, communion enriches it, and thereby it enriches the life of the whole. Communion and plenitude are the two meanings of the Church's attribute that is expressed through the terms "sobornicity" and "catholic."

After insisting on the uniformity of meaning between "orthodoxy" and "catholicity," John Karmiris adds, "Nevertheless, catholicity also means the fullness, the unity, and the identity of the Church as the body of the one Christ, as well as the plenitude of Him who fills all in all (Eph 1:23). It is the fullness of the Church, like a great spiritual, mystical unity, which as the body of the one Christ is guided by the one Holy Spirit. Thus, catholicity means in general the fullness and the plenitude of the one true Church, and especially the plenitude of the revelation guarded and preached by her and of the saving grace acquired by her, through which the salvation of the world in its entirety is sought."[40] Metropolitan Seraphim says that through catholicity one understands "the multiple unity of the Church, that is, the organic unity consisting of multiple persons, the unity of all believers incorporated within the body of Christ. This notion indicates the wholeness of the Church as the body of Christ, the plenitude of the divine-human life, its organic unity in the multiplicity of manifestations and functions, as well as the self-identity of the Church. Consequently, the characteristic of 'catholicity' is the unity of human beings

reestablished in Christ or within His body; it is the metaphysical unity of humanity saved through the Incarnation of the Word and through Christ's work of salvation."[41]

St. John Chrysostom insists on the idea that the members of the whole are diverse, as well as on the fact that in those members there is the common whole. Commenting on St. Paul's words "And if they were all one member, where would the body be?" (1 Cor 12:19), he says, "Now what he means is, If there were not among you great diversity, you could not be a body; and not being a body, you could not be one . . . As it is, however, because you are not all endowed with some one gift, therefore are you a body; and being a body, you are all one, and differ nothing from one another in this that you are a body."[42] One should observe the paradox: being diverse, you are one body; and being one body, or a unity, you differ nothing from one another. The openness of each person toward the whole as he is filled with the whole makes him rejoice in the whole; therefore he no longer lives only through what is diverse.

After presenting the paradox of the diversity and unity of the members in the body, St. John Chrysostom explains that their unity is due to the fact that they fulfill a common task. Then he draws this conclusion: "The reason is that every one of our members has both a working of its own and one which is common; and likewise there is in us a beauty which is peculiar and another which is common."[43] Certainly, only through thought processes can we distinguish between the proper function of the members and their common working. In reality, the entire body effectuates every working proper to every member, and every member fulfills the function of the entire body through his own function. Thus every one is open to the working of the entire body and rejoices in it. But no member is confused with the others, because each member assumes the whole body's working and powers in his own form. Even through this, the working of each member is useful to the whole and enriches it. Similarly, the same integral Spirit of Christ, or the same integral Church, is effective in the gift and working of each member.

The more intimately that Christ is present with His Spirit in the Church, the more real He makes this efficacy of the whole Church in all her members, and the greater the possibility for spiritual growth in the personal, differentiated members. For this spiritual growth comes

from the unending, unitary richness of Christ, a richness communicated by the Spirit in a spiritual way to the differentiated and unitary body of the Church. Thus the members are not made uniform, as is the case with an entity sustained by an external, nonsynodal authority that lacks the character of a body.

Wholeness. Understood this way, the wholeness of the Church has God as foundation and source—that is, Christ dwelling within her and working through the Holy Spirit—as well as the attributes of unity and holiness. The wholeness of the Church is strongly connected to her attribute of unity (which is none other than the precise expression of the mode of unity) and also to her attribute of holiness. If holiness consists of humanity's self-renunciation for God's sake, and of the self-renunciation of every believer for God and for his fellow human beings, it is a prerequisite for the complementarity that makes them one body of Christ with many members.

But Christ's wholeness or plenitude in the Church through the Holy Spirit has a dynamic and differentiated character, just like holiness and unity. Some of the Church's members experience in higher degrees the wholeness or plenitude of Christ in them and their integration into the plenitude of the Church. And the Church in her totality advances toward an eschatological fullness of the complete experience of God and of her total integration in God, toward the state when God "will be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). Properly speaking, this is the Church's destination. This integration into plenitude must become proper to the whole creation. After describing the various stages of integration, St. Maximus the Confessor continues,

> Then the human person [in Christ] unites what is perceived by the mind and what is perceived by the senses with each other by achieving equality with the angels in its manner of knowing, and thus makes the whole creation one single creation . . . And finally, beyond all these, the human person unites the created nature with the uncreated through love (O the wonder of God's love for us human beings!), showing them to be one and the same through the possession of grace, the whole [creation] wholly interpenetrated by God, and become completely whatever God is, save at the level of being, and receiving to itself the whole of God himself, and acquiring as a kind of prize for its ascent to God the most unique God himself, as the end

> of the movement of everything that moves towards it, and the firm and unmoved rest of everything that is carried towards it, being the undetermined and infinite limit and definition of every definition and law and ordinance, of reason and mind and nature.[44]

Only in this undetermined infinity in which creation is stabilized and reaches its definite "limit" does it find its plenitude, or the actualization of the entirety of its inner reasons, ordinances, and laws.

"Understood quantitatively and qualitatively, wholeness must be the goal of the Church in order to grow in Christ (Eph 4:15–16), [and to be] 'the increase that is from God' (Col 2:19), that she 'may be filled with all the fullness of God' (Eph 3:19), as 'the fullness of Him who fills all in all' (Eph 1:23), until 'we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ . . . speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ' (Eph 4:13, 15). Then the Church will come to the measure of the fullness of Christ."[45] For she will drink from this plenitude of infinity and will rejoice in it "through the power and the working of the Holy Spirit who dwells within her" and makes her capable of drinking from this plenitude; "this is how the fullness of the Church will be accomplished, [the fullness] that is the power that longs to include the entirety of humanity and the entire cosmos within the bosom of the Church and to recapitulate all in Christ."[46] This is how the fullness of the Church is made complete in particular from the infinite plenitude of Christ's divine life and love, so that the entire creation may be filled with Christ's divine infinity.

The Church is wholeness, is everything, and is plenitude because she has Christ, who is all in all. She is plenitude in a certain potential state but in motion toward her full actualization in the eschaton. That is why she has all the saving graces that lead all creation to deification; she has all the teaching that potentially includes all the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Orthodox Church is the Church of plenitude because she has never limited Christ's whole presence and workings within her, nor has she limited her teaching, which is an expression of this plenary presence of Christ. The Orthodox Church is fully capable of bearing fruit in the right way, toward the perfection of the faithful, according to St. Cyril of Jerusalem. As he says, the Church

also has fullness because she completely heals all kinds of sins "committed by soul or body, and [she] possesses in [herself] every form of virtue which is named, both in deeds and words, and in every kind of spiritual gifts."[47] Potentially, the Church has all perfection. Within the Church one can obtain the actualization of complete perfection in a way that one cannot obtain this in either Catholicism or Protestantism, because they do not employ Christ's sanctified body within the Church. Because the Church has the plenitude of teaching and grace as the expression of Christ's full presence within her, nothing can be added to this teaching. No heresy has ever added anything to it; on the contrary, the heresies limited it, and thus they made it to a great extent sterile. The heresies distanced themselves from this whole—from the plenitude of Christ's presence and gifts, and of the Church's teaching as the expression of that plenitude—because they no longer expressed the belief that Christ is found wholly in the intimacy of believing humanity.[48]

D. The Apostolicity of the Church

Just as Christ is viewed through the Church's other three attributes as the ultimate foundation and source of the Church, so is He viewed through apostolicity. The apostles were the first group of men who believed in Christ and gave witness to His Resurrection, that is, to His divinity. They were also the group through which Christ made Himself known as He was to all generations that followed and will follow—as God incarnate, crucified, and risen for our salvation and deification. The apostles did not give witness or speak about themselves but about Christ. They received this ministry not from themselves but from Christ. The Church was established on and continues to exist based on their faith, their testimony, their speaking about Christ, and the total dedication of their being to the work of making Christ known and of communicating Him.

Christ did not speak about Himself continuously to great multitudes of people, for they were changing around Him all the time. They could not necessarily and surely retain the content communicated to them because they were not near Him all the time. They could not retain the fullness of a firm understanding of His Person and of His unique work; rather, they would have retained certain portions that

could not have been integrated into one united whole. That is why He selected a small group of men upon whom He imprinted Himself with the authentic fullness of His Person and work. Thus this fullness could be retained and transmitted by them not in just a general and approximate way to all who would come to believe but also in a special and exact manner to certain groups of their followers who would maintain the same integral and authentic understanding of His Person and work throughout the ages.

Neither did Christ choose a single devoted person in whom He would confide His fullness but a group of men who, by receiving equally the same integral and authentic image of His Person and work, would be able to transmit it uniformly to their successors. In the uniform reception and transmission of Christ's image, both the members of that group and their successors had the assurance of its integral and true reception and transmission.

A single disciple of Christ could not have received the entire depth and richness of the Person of Christ, of His teaching and deeds, because he would not have been able to remember this. Nor would he have been able to give his listeners objective assurance about the truth being preached. One single person from among Christ's disciples could not have overseen the integral and authentic transmission of Christ's image and work by the other disciples; this oversight was exercised upon each of them by the remembrance of Christ Himself, who was imprinted on their being over a prolonged period of time. It was an oversight that they verified through their communion with each other. The Twelve had to be equal, so that the authority of a single one among them would not unilaterally distort the unity of their preaching.

That is why in the New Testament all the apostles together are called "the foundation" of the Church (Eph 2:20)—but a foundation that depends on the ultimate foundation, which is Christ. The Holy Apostle Paul says that the Church is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" (2:20). As the chief cornerstone, Christ unites the apostles, or better said, He unites their faith and the teaching about Himself in a unique foundation. This foundation is that of His Person profoundly imprinted on their being, a foundation upon which the Church can be built until the end of time as a unitary, spiritual building that is always the same. She is the city whose wall has "twelve foundations, and on

them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev 21:14). They are the "pillars" of the Church (Gal 2:9). But the Lord Himself is the ultimate "foundation," which cannot be replaced by another (1 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20). He is "the one who sustains everything; for the chief cornerstone sustains both the wall and the foundation . . . and the roof and the partitions and everything else; everything is carried by Him."[49]

The apostles as "foundation" do not render Christ ineffectual as foundation, nor does Christ as foundation render the apostles ineffectual as a superimposed foundation. The apostles themselves as a superimposed foundation render Christ transparent as the ultimate foundation; that is, only through the apostles does Christ lay a true foundation for the Church. The apostles uniformly guide the way to Christ; they point to Him as the chief cornerstone. However, if Christ had addressed a changing crowd, if He had not made the group of the apostles into a firm foundation, then the Church could not have been established and could not have continued to exist. Therefore the Church is apostolic because through the apostles she knows Christ fully and authentically, and she also inherited from them the faith in Him and the certainty about His Resurrection.

Both of these—the faith in Christ and the certainty about His Resurrection—have been maintained during the course of the Church's historical existence; the Church has preserved herself through the apostolic succession of bishops in communion, or through the grace of the Holy Spirit received by the apostles at Pentecost and transmitted to the bishops, and then transmitted by the bishops to the priests and to the faithful. That is why the Church receives from the apostles and continues to have within herself Christ Himself with all His gifts. It was necessary for the apostles themselves, and not other persons, to receive the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Church—that is, the Spirit of Christ, who would remain in the Church. The reason for this was so that they would see that the illumination brought by the Spirit in regard to Christ's Person and work—as well as the power that the Spirit breathed on them to witness to Him—refers, in fact, to the Christ whom they knew; this was also so that they would see this Spirit as the Spirit of Christ Himself, sent by Christ Himself. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit that the apostles received in the beginning, they were able to maintain and communicate in an integral way, to the Church in general and to the bishops in particular, the faith in Christ

and the teaching about Him, along with the grace of the relationship with Christ, who is present in the Church through the Holy Spirit. And in turn they were able to maintain and transmit all this uninterruptedly to the succeeding generations within the Church.

Let us take a look at each of the three components of apostolicity.

1. The apostles are the first group of men who believed in Christ's divinity, a belief strengthened decisively in them by the fact that they had personally seen the risen Christ. Their faith, their testimony to His Resurrection, represents the first foundation on which the Church was built and on which she continues to endure and grow. If the apostles' faith and testimony to the Lord's Resurrection did not exist, the Church could not have been established, and neither could she have endured or grown.

2. Through the apostles, we know Christ as He was; we know His teaching, through which He explained Himself and indicated the path for the human person's salvation and perfection. On one hand His teaching is not separated from their faith but rather forms the content or the basis of their faith. On the other hand their faith, which received its ultimate strengthening through the Resurrection, gave them the vision to understand Christ's Person and work, as well as the entire content of His teaching. That is why after the Resurrection they were able to see Jesus' Person, teaching, and work implied in the Scriptures before Him, and therefore they could see His Person, teaching, and work illuminating the entire Scripture and Christ Himself. They were able to see Christ and His work as the fulfillment of God's plan for salvation.

After the Resurrection Christ Himself drew the apostles' attention to this hidden presence of His in the entire Scripture before Him, and they were able to understand what they could not understand clearly before, even though Jesus had affirmed it in the teaching He gave to them beforehand. The culmination of the plan of salvation through Christ's actual Resurrection had not yet taken place, something that prevented its accurate comprehension. "Then He said to them, 'These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.' And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day'" (Luke 24:44–46).

The apostles could not have written the Gospels before the Resurrection, and their preaching could not have had the breadth of vision to include the entire Old Testament Scripture in the plan of salvation in Christ; this is a vision whose written form is found especially in the Epistles of the Holy Apostle Paul.

This does not mean that by writing down the Gospels the apostles presented a Christ who was different from the real one, or that they preached a teaching that was different in content from Christ's teaching, which expresses Christ Himself.

We have seen that Jesus Himself reminds the apostles that He often indicated to them before the Resurrection that Moses and the prophets spoke about Him. In fact, He often showed how the Old Testament is fulfilled in Him (Luke 4:21). Jesus was the same before the Resurrection, but because His prophecy about His Resurrection had not yet been fulfilled—that is, He had not been manifested in His glory—for the apostles many things about Him remained not only hidden but also not understood.

The vocabulary of the Gospels was not invented by the apostles; rather, it is the one used by Christ. However, some forms of expressing the meaning of the Savior's Person and work—forms that are included in the apostles' preaching and writing—belong to them, but these forms do not lack a connection and a relation to the ones used by Jesus. Thus the apostles' preaching and writing about Jesus have on one hand a certain originality in expression and therefore are apostolic in a proper sense; on the other hand they fit fully into the content and forms of Jesus' discourses and teaching to the apostles.

In any case, only through the apostles do we know what and how Jesus taught. It is from them that we have this teaching that is encompassed in the forms and expressions of a more explicit presentation, a presentation that has remained the essence of the content of the Church's teaching and of her spiritual relationship with Christ. This presentation is normative for all times not only because it is the first exposition of Jesus' works and teaching, and thus the most authentic exposition, but also because it grows organically in its forms of expression from the Savior's expressions.

The Church is apostolic at all times because she has the same faith as the apostles and stands on the foundation of the content and form of expression given to her by the Savior. However, the succeeding gen-

erations of the Church's faithful did not inherit the quality as apostles, because they did not inherit the apostles' position as the first to have faith in Christ and as the first interpreters of His teaching and works.

In the apostles' quality as witnesses and initial interpreters of the revelation in Christ—which implies the fact that they lived near Jesus everyday for three years, that they saw Him risen, and that they directly received His Spirit—there is also included the quality as instruments for finalizing and completing the revelation in Christ.

The apostolic presentation of Christ's Person and work—that is, the apostolic formulation of His teaching and the teaching about Him—remains the permanent and unchanging basis of the Church's faith and teaching, because it is the most faithful rendition of this teaching. As true instruments of the revelation in Christ, the apostles give, through presenting this revelation and through its forms of expression, their direct insight into the divine infinity of Christ's Person and unique humanity. No other kind of expression throughout the course of the Church's history would ever be able to surpass the apostolic rendition of this infinity or the authentic apostolic insight into it. All others will remain more limited and without warmth, perspicacity, and richness of content, because their foundation is not the apostles' intimate insight into the Person of Christ.

3. The third factor that elevates the apostles above all the succeeding generations of faithful and that also makes them the foundation of the Church is that they were the first to have received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and they received Him without any human mediation.

They received the Holy Spirit without any human mediation because they received Him directly from the body of Christ, fully pneumatized by the Ascension. This happened to them because during the three years in which they lived with Jesus, they achieved a great spiritual union with Him; on account of this fact, after the Resurrection and in His first pneumatization, Jesus imparts to them the first breathing of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22).

Through the power of the Holy Spirit received at Pentecost, which represents Christ's full pneumatic dwelling in them and at the same time in the early Church, the apostles become the first visible human intermediaries of the Holy Spirit, or of Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit whom they received, on one hand they are fully confirmed in the faith and in the understanding of the content

of Christ's Person and work; on the other hand they are baptized, being cleansed of the original sin through the indwelling of Christ and of all His graces in them, as well as all His actual and potential works. *As the first to receive the Holy Spirit, that is, without any visible human intermediary, they are confirmed in the quality of the nontransmissible apostolate.* This also means the quality as the first preachers and transmitters of the Holy Spirit's full grace. Thus because they are the first who received Christ within themselves, they also became the first Christians, because the Christians after them have received the same Christ. Nevertheless, by receiving the mission as the first sustainers of the full revelation and of Christ's graces and works, the apostles received the power to transmit this special mission as transmitters of Christ, and of His graces and works, to a group of successors—the bishops—so that they in turn will transmit them to their successors. In turn, all the bishops transmit Christ and the works received through the apostles to the priests, and through the priests, or independent of them, to those who believe.

Pentecost thus confirms the apostles' threefold quality: as the nontransmissible apostolate, as the faithful who transmit the faith in Christ and the teaching about Him in general to those who want to receive these, and as those entrusted with the mission to transmit the responsibility of preaching and communicating the Spirit of Christ to a group of special persons, or to the bishops, and through them the saving grace to all the faithful.

The three qualities form one whole in the apostles. Because they were the first who received the Holy Spirit directly from Christ, whose body was fully pneumatized, the apostles became the starting point of the apostolic succession, of the episcopate's uninterrupted mission and responsibility to preach the whole teaching about Christ and to communicate Christ Himself with His works to the whole Church. And only because they were the first Christians who received Christ within themselves through the Holy Spirit, and thus were the first members of the Church, could they transmit Christ to succeeding generations in the Church, and through the apostolic succession they can transmit to the episcopate the special mission and grace of preaching Christ in the Church and communicating Him and His grace to future Christians.[50]

The succession of grace is dependent upon the continuity of the teaching; in turn, *the grace that the bishops receive through apostolic*

succession guarantees the preservation of the apostolic teaching.[51] For this grace is not transmitted without the apostolic teaching; it is not transmitted into emptiness. Before receiving the hierarchical grace, the would-be bishop assures the bishops who ordain him—and by this the entire episcopate and the Church—that he has assumed the faith and the apostolic teaching, and therefore he is able to fulfill the mission entrusted to him through the apostolic grace to maintain and preach the apostolic teaching. Moreover, *Christ's grace, transmitted through the Holy Spirit and applied in the synodal communion, is necessary for the correct interpretation of the teaching*, for the preaching and solidary preservation of the teaching from the apostolic tradition, in light of which the written apostolic teaching must be interpreted as well.

The Church is thus apostolic because she has inherited the faith, the teaching, and the grace from the apostles as the first to have received these from Christ through the Holy Spirit. The apostolicity of the Church unites history with the present.[52] In the transmission of Christ's grace and teaching, each generation brings its contribution through its faith. In transmitting them each generation is pneumatized through the mediation of the previous one and brings its contribution to the pneumatization of the succeeding generation.

Apostolicity means connecting the generations within the whole tradition that comes from the apostles, because this tradition represents the whole revelation, but also within the grace and spirituality that come uninterruptedly from the Spirit of Christ through the apostles. This does not mean, however, that the Church looks only to the past, that Christ belongs to history and the apostles interpose themselves between Him and us, or that grace comes only from the past.

We enter into relationship with the living Christ even now. The Spirit of Christ, or His grace, also descends from above even now, at every baptism, in a continuous Pentecost.

For this we must know about Christ, must believe in Him decisively. We receive this faith from the priests and from existing Christians who believed before us, and they in turn received it from those before them and so on, going all the way back to the apostles, the first to have known about and believed in Christ. History is necessary to us if we are to enter into a relationship with Christ in the present time. The faith of those before us means Christ's presence in them through the Holy Spirit at the present moment. In this sense Christ comes

through the Holy Spirit from them and so on, all the way back to the apostles: His presence at this moment in those who believed before us is the source of His grace within us, or this presence in them becomes a presence within us, in His Church, a presence that unites all of us who believe.

Christ, who is in them and above them, is also in the Church as well, and He is above the Church. In this way we also receive Him from them and from heaven. Through their faith and their knowledge, they present us with the occasion to receive Christ from them but also from heaven, as from the ultimate height where Christ is. The priests and the bishops, who celebrate the mysteries and preach, offer knowledge about Christ, who is *in* and *above* the Church. Their prayer, which occasions the coming of Christ within us, is offered in the Church, and that is why the Church prays in them.

The Church transmits Christ from within her and occasions the dwelling in us of Christ, who is in heaven, or in the ultimate height. For the Christ who is in the Church is the same Christ who is found in the ultimate height or depth. The apostles received the Holy Spirit, or Christ through the Holy Spirit, through the prayer that they learned from Christ (Acts 1:14). He comes within us through our prayer. And in our prayer, we are assisted by the priest's and the Church's prayer but also by the Holy Spirit; in this prayer there is knowledge about Christ and about the faith in Him that comes from the apostles. There also comes from the apostles, along with the faith in Christ and knowledge about Him, the warmth of prayer and thus Christ Himself and the Holy Spirit who prays in us.

CHAPTER 5

THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: DIVINE GRACE AND HUMAN FREEDOM

A. The Working of the Holy Spirit, or Divine Grace

If from the constitutive point of view the Church consists of Christ the head and of humanity His body, then the Holy Spirit is the one who unites Christ with human persons and human persons with Christ. The Spirit is thus the sanctifying, life-giving, and unifying power in the Church. He descends at Pentecost, and through this very descent He gives real existence to the Church. He determines the constitution of the Church, whose premise was established by Christ in His body and through His saving works. But the Holy Spirit remains in the Church ceaselessly through an unending shining forth from Christ. He is the factor through which the Church, once she was constituted, is sustained in existence, for He brings new human members into her, implants Christ's graces and gifts in them, and thus unites them in Christ, sanctifying them and giving them new life—the divine life from Christ's life. Through the Spirit the divine life in the Church flows and keeps growing, and thus the Church herself grows.

Although the Spirit's working in the Church is no longer accomplished through palpable miracles, such as His descent at Pentecost, He maintains the divine life in her, that is, He continues to maintain the Church. He surely does not do this without the cooperation of the human factor.

The general saving work of the Spirit of Christ in the Church is effectuated through divine grace, or that very saving work is divine grace.

According to the teaching of Holy Scripture and the Holy Fathers, divine grace is not good in and of itself, detached from God.[1] This teaching has attained its clearest expression in St. Gregory Palamas' formulation: that grace is an uncreated energy emerging from the divine being of the three hypostases, and it is not separated from this being or from the three hypostases. The Greek term "*energeia*" ("energy") is translated into Romanian with "*lucrare*" ("work" or "working"). This makes evident the fact that within the working of grace the divine subject Himself who performs it is present, for there is no work without a worker. Therefore we can use the term "energy" in the sense that in work the energy of him who does the work is found. But this energy is also always imprinted on those for whom the work is done. Thus, by understanding grace as divine "energy," we understand it on one hand in the sense of the Spirit's energy actualized as work, and on the other hand in the sense of energy that is imprinted on the being of the person in whom the Holy Spirit works, making him capable of working, that is, capable of cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

In regard to grace, we should equally emphasize its quality as inexhaustible power that comes to us from the infinite Godhead that dwells in Christ's humanity, as well as from the luminous perspective that grace opens to us in the infinity of communion with the Person of Christ or with the Holy Trinity—a perspective that was opened for us in Christ out of love. Grace is the open window toward the infinity of God as Person, or as a Triune communion of Persons, once God has placed us in relationship with Him through grace. Grace removes life's limitations from our existence and thereby satisfies in a real way its thirst for the transcendent personal infinitude. As such grace gives us the possibility for our fulfillment as the "image of God," or helps us to advance in the likeness of Him, in the infinity of our loving relationship with Him.

The Holy Spirit as hypostasis is active in various ways and in various degrees in human beings, producing various effects in them. But through all these effects He unites the human person with Christ, and thus He helps him to partake of the holiness and the infinite deification that is in the body of Christ, or in His human nature.

We better understand the presence of the Person of Christ Himself in the grace communicated to us through the Holy Spirit by using

the analogy offered to us in the relationships between human persons. When a person exerts a positive spiritual influence over another person, the influence of the former does not remain a simple external operation for the latter, but that influence is imprinted on his being as an uninterrupted power exerted by him, a power that can also be actualized by the second person for the benefit of the former whenever he wants. This actualization is nothing other than making the transition to the cooperation between the two persons. Therefore in work one person meets the other person not only in a transient way but also in a lasting way.

On one hand the Holy Spirit's grace, imprinted as power and as an infinite horizon upon the being of the human person, is felt by the latter as the presence and working of the Holy Spirit Himself, but not always. For this the human person must look more intensely within himself. On the other hand this feeling of power and intensified light within him is not always translated into work. When it is translated into work, he immediately feels that the Spirit of Christ also works together with him. Somehow, there exist two forms or degrees of the presence of grace in the human person: its imprint upon the human person as power (even though this presence is a work of the Spirit), and as a presence fully assimilated and felt by the human person as work through his own work.

This teaching about grace is the quality that places the human person in direct relationship with God, who works in him, in contrast with the Catholic theology that, through the doctrine of created grace, leaves the human person alone with an impersonal power added to his natural powers, or placed at his disposal.

In addition to this, the Holy Spirit is active in the many gifts that He gives, which are just as many powers. But the basis of all gifts is the graces of the mysteries (sacraments). These graces are the fundamental workings that the Spirit accomplishes in all people for their salvation, workings that are imprinted in them as powers. Through them the Holy Spirit unites the human person with Christ in a fundamental way, granting him certain powers that elevate him above the strict powers of his nature, or placing him in a relationship of cooperation with Christ Himself by actualizing these powers in works.

At the beginning of all gifts, there is a grace received through a particular mystery. From the human person's cooperation with grace

there spring various gifts, corresponding to his natural abilities. The grace granted through the mysteries presupposes a preparation; the significance of this preparation lies more in assuring the future cooperation on the part of the human person.

The very first grace is the one given through the mystery of baptism. Even this grace presupposes a preparation (or at least a lack of refusal) on the part of the human person, an openness that is a basis for future cooperation between the human person and grace. This condition is also fulfilled by children. In their case the condition of cooperating with the Spirit's working that is begun at baptism is assured even more, given the Christian environment of the family to whom the child is always almost fully open. A child is under the influence of the family more than an adult.

Thus the grace bestowed through the mystery generally means the beginning of the Spirit's working within a human person, or the beginning of a new kind of working that is imprinted as a new kind of power; this new kind of working is based, however, on the working begun at baptism. As the working of the Spirit continues, it produces in the human person an even greater power, or a permanent state, which bears fruit in good works, in avoiding sins, in a state of purity, and in a stronger and more vibrant faith. In all these grace is present as the working of the Spirit.

That is why one can speak of a state of grace, or of the grace that envelops the human person. St. Symeon the New Theologian asks Christ for a grace that may always be with him, cover him, protect him against shame, clothe him, be within him, and enlighten him.[2] With the passing of time, the human person is transformed entirely through grace, or through the working of the Spirit, if he cooperates with Him; he bears in his entire being the active seal of this grace as the seal of Christ, as an ever more luminous vestment, and as the transparent light that pours out from his inner self, which is filled with Christ, and envelops his entire exterior countenance. The working of grace produces an ontological, spiritual state that can be experienced and expressed as such for as long as the working of the Holy Spirit or of Christ lasts within the human person, and together with it, his cooperation as well.

St. Symeon also speaks of the seal of grace, but he prays that Christ will also not withdraw it from him:

> You who have shown me Your marvelous glory, O my God, and have filled me with Your Divine Spirit, O my Christ, and have covered me completely with Your spiritual illumination, grant me irrevocably Your Grace, O my God, to Your servant; right to the end without diminishment. Do not withdraw it, O Master, do not turn it away, O Creator. Do not ignore me whom You have placed before Your face and numbered among Your servants of light. You have marked me with Your seal of grace and claimed me as Your own.[3]

Grace as a permanent state is therefore a state of the continuous and active presence of Christ Himself before the human person, and of the human person before Christ—an immediate state of dialogical, dynamic, and living relationship.

Therefore grace, together with all the gifts, belongs not only to the Spirit but also to Christ. Properly speaking, it was through Christ that grace was made available and accessible, because Christ has raised our nature, which He assumed, to the state of sinlessness—of its total offering to God through the sacrifice on the cross—and to the state of incorruptibility through the Resurrection and of ultimate pneumatization through the Ascension. Before Christ our nature was closed off to the working of God within it, to the penetration within it of God's infinity of life and love—that is, to grace—in the sense that our nature refused any cooperation with it.

Therefore, grace and all the gifts represent the bringing into our inner self, through the Holy Spirit, the good things comprised in our deified nature in Christ.

Grace and the gifts are not insignificant, indeterminate divine workings. Even if that were the case, these workings would heal whatever is evil in our nature and would strengthen it for the good things in a manner corresponding to the predispositions and special capacities of each person. But because the working Spirit shines forth from Christ, who as man was also filled with the Spirit, the workings of the Spirit bring us the state of our nature perfected in Christ; the Spirit makes us according to the image of Christ, realized as perfect man. He helps us to walk the path that Christ walked as man in order to deify and to completely realize our nature. He helps us to lead a life without sin, without egoistic narrowness, to die to ourselves for God, to die to everything that is contrary to God. At the same time he puts into our

soul the forces that will make it able to resurrect the body once these forces develop completely at the end of time, through the Spirit's perfect and direct shining forth from Christ, who will be manifested in glory. There is no other path on which the believer might be perfected except the one followed by Christ and from the power of Christ, who has assimilated into His humanity the infinite divine energies by making them energies of His human nature, and at the same time accessible to us.

The Spirit has no other role than to make ours these energies of Christ and the gifts that bring us closer to His likeness. For if they were not assumed on our behalf, we could not achieve perfection in the proper sense. Through the Spirit we enter into a dialogue with Christ in which the power and light of His knowledge are communicated to us, the power and light of gradually knowing the divine infinity that dwells within His humanity, which is accessible to us. Through the Spirit we imitate and receive what belongs to Christ in a free dialogue with endless progress. We become so many hypostases through whom the Spirit's hypostasis speaks and works, hypostases that become capable of speaking with Christ as partners adapted to Him and able to receive what belongs to Him. The Spirit becomes internalized in all human subjects who receive Him; He makes them hypostases and partners of Christ, in dialogue with Him. And He makes them a sort of unity of hypostases, because the Spirit as hypostasis unifies them in their speech and work, in dialogue with Christ.

There begins a *kenosis* of the Spirit, who descends to our level in order to raise us up to the level of being Christ's partners. The Spirit is not a hypostasis with a distinct human nature, which means that He is not incarnate as we are or as Christ is, and therefore there is nothing that hinders Him from infusing Himself as hypostasis into our hypostases, becoming a sort of hypostasis of our persons. This makes Him even closer to us. Christ is a model always distinct from us, our model with whom we speak, distinct from us as we are distinct among ourselves; He is connected to us and could be connected even more, just as we are connected among ourselves and could be connected even more. Christ always remains our partner with whom we speak, whom we imitate, from whom we ask for powers, and from whom the powers come to us in this dialogue, and He Himself also becomes interior to us, but in a different way. We do all these things through the Spirit,

who incorporates us without nullifying us; neither does He appear before us as a dialogical partner who is distinct from us. A dialogue is being carried on between us and Christ, partly in the historical plane, and partly in the plane of eternity, because we ourselves are accepted and raised up to the position of the Spirit, or the Spirit accepts our position on the basis of a supreme intimacy. This, however, does not nullify our personhood; rather, it develops us as persons, just as the light of the sun that enters into us and gives us the capacity to see does not nullify our personhood. That is why it has been said that the saints are those who have incorporated the Spirit, not in the sense that their human nature has the Spirit as hypostasis, as Christ is the hypostasis of His human nature, but in the sense that they as subjects arrive at a supreme intimacy with the Spirit—not only their knowing and willing subjects but also their bodies, that is, their entire being. This intimacy between the Spirit and the human person who believes makes the spiritual person feel the Spirit not as a "Thou"; rather, every time he says "I," he hears the Spirit saying in him His own "I." His "I" has become the "I" of the Spirit, and the "I" of the Spirit has become his "I," in a perfect unity without confusion. They are two interpenetrated "I"s: the "I" of the Spirit imprinted in the "I" of the human person in order to develop his "I." The powers of the Spirit, and thus the powers of Christ, have become the powers of the human person. The Spirit does not affirm Himself in the human person through the category of "Thou," like Christ, but through the category of "I," in order to strengthen the "I" of the human person as an "I" who loves Christ. By descending to the level of the human "I," the Spirit becomes humble in a human fashion so that the human person may also humble himself, and that through humility he may be exalted.

As the Spirit of communion between the human person and Christ, and of communion in Christ with all the faithful, He is especially an "I" of the Church—an "I" in whom the faithful of the Church feel as one, for every one feels that his "I" is penetrated by the "I"s of others because the same "I" of the Spirit is present and humble in all in their communion with Christ and among themselves. Due to this fact and the fact that the Spirit is still a divine "I," I feel this "I" as superior to me. It is an "I" in whom my "I" is exalted, it is an "I" who exalts me, it is an "I" in whom we all gain a transparence and an ever-greater interpenetration in which we feel as one but not fallen into the impersonal. For

this common "I" enlightens each one of us more and more as a proper "I" in the "I" of communion.[4]

Certainly, Christ also represents us before the Father as a human "I." But before us He is a "Thou," because He is from among us. The Spirit, however, does not represent us as a human "I" distinct from us and therefore as a "Thou" that is ours. But being helped by the Spirit who is present in our "I"s, we present ourselves before the Father, as the Son does; on one hand we present ourselves as a multiplicity of "I"s, and on the other hand as a single "I," or as a multiple "I." Through the Spirit the Son makes us similar to Himself and actualizes the potential He gave us to raise ourselves up to the level of the dialogue with Him as God, in which we are equal partners with Him through grace—that is, through the Spirit—or as gods and children of God through grace.

Therefore grace as the working of the Spirit and of Christ moves within the Church, while the Spirit moves within us as our common "I"—as an "I" who does not nullify us but who strengthens our love for Christ and our unity with Him, as well as among all those who believe. Here the paradox of liberty becomes apparent. On one hand the Spirit works, feels, and knows within the human person; on the other hand the human person himself works with a greater freedom than where the Spirit is absent.

Thus the Spirit belongs to the Church. This is another one of His characteristics. That is why we cannot speak of grace as something outside the Church, but only as something that belongs to the Church. Likewise, one cannot speak of the Church without grace, or without the Holy Spirit. Through the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Church took her being. His abidance maintains the Church continuously in being, this abidance being at the same time His constant descent and the Church's renewal. It is within the Church that the working of the Spirit, or grace, is continued. His work, or grace, constitutes the Church, and grace is not manifested except within the Church.

If the Church is born from Christ's dwelling with His deified or pneumatized body in those who believe, and if this indwelling has an active, efficient character through the working of the Spirit, or through grace, then grace constitutes the Church, and it cannot but work within the Church. Christ cannot save human beings except by imprinting Himself in them with His effective wholeness through the Spirit, even

if not all of them can assimilate Him in the entire depth and richness of this wholeness.

This means that He cannot be imprinted with one of His parts in a person, or in a group of persons, and with other parts in other persons or other groups. He imprints Himself in all as the same entire Christ, and thus through the same working of the Spirit, or through the same grace.

Through this the Church continues to be constituted, perpetuated, deepened, and enriched in Christ's endless life. If the words of St. Irenaeus that "where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church"[5] are true, then just as true is the fact that where the Church is, there is grace, or the working of the Spirit; and where grace is, there is the Church. The Holy Spirit or His working is there where Christ is imprinted entirely with His deified body, with the endless reserve of divine life. And we can gain this divine life even if not all of us have Christ from the beginning in all His actual depth, or even if one believer grows more than others in the faith, holiness, and knowledge of the same Christ through the same Holy Spirit. Even though all are growing in a different measure, all grow on the basis of the common faith and thus of the common relationship with the same Christ; all benefit from the same endless reserve of divine life found in Christ and communicated through the Spirit, or assimilated through the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the same in all, the same in the whole Church; in all there is the same integral Holy Spirit of Christ, or the same true working of the Spirit, or the same grace of His, even if He is actualized in some persons more than in others.

Through His common working in all, the wholly present Spirit of Christ aims to recapitulate all of us in Christ, in His divine, endless life. Through this working He does not promote divisions among Christians; He is not driven by the will to close the circle of those who partake of Christ. Through His working in the faithful, He creates the disposition toward unity. Anyone who is dominated by the propensity toward division does not belong to the Spirit of Christ. He who separates himself from the Church is not within Christ's grace, nor in the current of the unitary life in Christ.

This working of Christ's Spirit, or grace, is absolutely necessary for our salvation, if salvation means partaking of the divine life from the

body of the Lord Jesus and if grace is precisely this partaking. Grace effects the beginning of our salvation, and it is necessary for us all the time so that we may be saved.

About the necessity of grace at the beginning of salvation the Lord Jesus says, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him" (John 6:44). If grace is the shining forth of Christ's personal energy in those who open themselves up to Him through faith, it cannot be snatched away as an impersonal entity. There must be an initiative of the personal Christ so that His saving relationship with one believer or another may be achieved. But Christ wants all to be saved. Regarding the beginning of salvation through grace, Jesus Christ also says, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). First God must voluntarily enter within the human person's sphere of existence and send His love toward that person so that he may be able to receive power for a new life.

And regarding the continuing necessity of grace, St. Paul says, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13; see also Eph 2:8). And also: "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end" (Heb 3:14).

When we desist from the relationship with the personal God, from His working in us, we fall away from the state of salvation and from our advancement in it, regardless of the level we have reached. Only in a positive relationship with God are we saved, or better said, we are only saved in such a relationship with Christ, in whose humanity the divine life's infinity is made available and proper to us through the Spirit, or through His grace.

From here it follows that grace is given to us freely, for we cannot in any way force or obligate God as Person to enter into relationship with us. But Christ does not refuse to communicate His life to us through grace, given that He is the basic divine hypostasis of the entire human race, and thus the hypostasis that is open to all. If every human hypostasis is characterized by openness toward other hypostases through its nature's communication with the nature of other human persons, so much the more is this the character of the hypostasis of the Word, who became the hypostasis of our human nature. The Son of God, bearer of the infinite divine life, has entered through His body into a potential communicability with all human persons. The working of the Spirit,

or His grace, is directed from Him toward all; it is directed out of His pure love, not on account of some merit or due to our previous deeds. Some tendencies toward the good, toward tearing down the wall of his egoism, have certainly been left within the human person; if he uses them he thus opens himself up to the grace that is offered to him, and this makes him able to receive God's saving grace more easily. Through his character as a dialogical being, he remains in a sort of weakened dialogue with the Word. This is how we are to understand cases such as that of Cornelius (Acts 10:35). This power implanted by God, through which our being is able to resist sins and to do good, was used by some more than others even before grace had been received.

It was the Holy Virgin Mary who has translated this power into action to the fullest, and for this reason she also enjoyed greater help from God. Nicholas Cabasilas says that by translating this "power" into action like "no one else," she "moved God toward love for the human person" and "attracted the sinless one, and thus He became man for the Virgin's sake, He who was disgusted with man on account of sin."[6] But the saving grace comes to the Holy Virgin herself only through the body that the Son of God assumed from her, at the very moment in which He began to form His body within her on the human ontological plane. God the Word had to be really articulated in the human community so that the state of salvation could be extended from Him, as from the central man, into all those who believe. The natural powers toward the good are also accentuated in this humanity, the humanity in which Christ is extended with His body through the working of the Holy Spirit, who shines forth from Him. This is the position in which the Church is found.

Being offered to all in the Church, the working of the Spirit or the grace of Christ, because Christ dwells in her with His body, does not force the human person's freedom; that is, *it does not work irresistibly*, forcing the human person to receive it and to be saved against his will, with or without his cooperation.

The fact that not all are saved is due to the lack of cooperation between some human persons and grace, not because God predestines some to salvation and others to damnation. He who is not saved either does not accept or no longer accepts the union of his "I" with the Spirit's "I," and thus with the Church's "I" achieved in the Spirit; or he did not want to realize the union of his "I" with the Spirit's "I" in the

Church's "I." In this way he has broken his relationship with Christ as "Thou." And because the human "I" is fully realized in the Church's "I," this separation means the weakening of his "I," of his freedom, and of his reality as subject.

Holy Scripture clearly affirms both God's offering of grace to all and the human person's capacity to refuse it, or the fact that grace is not irresistible. The first is affirmed in the following texts: God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). Christ Jesus "gave Himself [as] a ransom for all" (1 Tim 2:6). "For many are called, but few chosen" (Matt 20:16). The second is affirmed by the Scripture in all the places where it shows how some human beings, some cities, or the Jewish people were against the working of the divine grace or of God's call (Rev 3:29; Acts 7:51; Matt 23:37; Isa 5:4; 65:2; Matt 11:21; etc.).

Holy Scripture admits only a predestination conditioned by God's foreknowledge regarding some persons' cooperation or noncooperation with His grace. "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom 8:29). The following places ought to be understood in the same way: Ephesians 1:4–11, Philippians 2:13, 1 Corinthians 4:7, and chapter 9 of the Epistle to the Romans.

The predestination to salvation of only some persons would contradict God's love, which was manifested in the Lord's Incarnation and cross, and the universal/ontological meaning of the assumption of human nature, as well as the universal value of His cross. The predestination to salvation of only some persons or of all persons reduces salvation to the level of manipulating human beings as if they were objects, and thus salvation is no longer understood as a matter of communion between Christ as Person and human beings as persons, for Christ cannot offer communion arbitrarily only to some, and human beings cannot be forced to accept communion. If God does not offer communion to all, it means that He does not consider some persons worthy and capable of communion by their very nature. Neither does He consider human beings as equal in value by the very nature He gave them. This would mean God's negation of His own creation. Outside communion with God, and therefore outside the Spirit's working within the human person, the human person's gifts cannot be developed, and thus they would be given in vain.

B. The Human Person's Free Cooperation with Grace

The working of the Spirit as Person within us requires our free cooperation; this shows the importance that God gives us as persons. The Spirit asks us to assume His working and to make it our own through our will and work. The Spirit does not force; that is, He does not nullify the will that God has given us through creation. He does not nullify this will because He Himself is free of all passions and therefore of the passion to dominate as well. Freedom is the most proper characteristic of the Spirit, of the authentically supreme Spirit: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor 3:17). The Spirit is not dominated by any will to dominate; He does not want to dominate any person but rather wants to liberate him of everything that limits and dominates him so that he may be able to activate all his powers, thus advancing into the infinity of the divine life in the free and loving dialogue with Christ. The Spirit wants the human person's free consent while guiding him toward the infinity of the divine life and in its eternal newness. He wants to liberate the human person from the passions that enslave him and keep him enclosed in a monotonous repetition. He wants to make him free for the love of God, the infinite source of all gifts. The Spirit helps us to reach "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21; cf. Gal 5:13). He makes us free in God for the ever-new love of other persons. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free" (Gal 5:1). Far from making us slaves, the working of the Spirit makes us free only because it gives us the power to approach the free God, to be imprinted ever more deeply with His image, to become like Him (Eph 3:12).

But freedom is not a whim; it is not freedom to sin (which in fact means slavery) or a narrowness due to egoism and to repeating the same passions that take over our freedom. It does mean liberation from the slavery that has the appearance of liberty, from the slavery that cunningly hides under the mask of freedom.

The freedom that the Spirit gives us goes hand in hand and grows along with the spiritual life. He is the Spirit of freedom because He is the Spirit of life; by calling us to freedom and helping us to advance in it, He becomes for us a cause of life. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2).

St. Cyril of Alexandria links the Spirit's power to make us free to His dignity as master of Himself.[7] In fact, he who is master of himself is free. But only the one who is not possessed by passions and who also is able to free others from these passions is free.

True freedom is the freely accepted submission to the good, to the love of the other, to the voluntary obligation toward the good of one's neighbor and toward God, who asks us to serve the good of others as well as our own true good. Only in true freedom is there true service. There exists a slavery of love that at the same time is true freedom: not the physical love of self, but the love of one's eternal good and that of one's neighbor, a love whose foundation is the love of God, the only One in whom our good and the good of all is assured. The true good is never an exclusive good but is always in a free and loving relationship with others. He who does not serve others in this sense does not serve himself either. His service is only superficial. He does not serve others sincerely, but only in order to control them. St. Peter the Apostle exhorts us to maintain this freedom—which is the same as the slavery to God, who truly makes us free—and to guard it against its falsifications: "[Live] as free [men], yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God" (1 Pet 2:16; see also Gal 5:13).

We will be judged according to the law of this unfalsified freedom inasmuch as we have observed it (Jas 2:12). For only the law of this freedom compels our inner being to love God and neighbor. Without it we remain in the slavery of egoism that can take only the mask of freedom. The law of this freedom is "the perfect law" that consists of fulfilling the commandments of love, and it will make us blessed in what we do and in love's deep penetration into our being (Jas 1:25).

This freedom is manifested in our effort to avoid being enslaved by the passions, which are always egoistic, and to do good works. It implies the effort to cooperate with the working of the Holy Spirit. Grace, far from enslaving our freedom, helps us to be free for this cooperation.

In fact, the freedom of our cooperation with the Spirit is implied in the fact that grace is a working of the Spirit as Person, and through it the Spirit wishes to lead us to the perfection of love. In this very cooperation with the Person of the Spirit, the love between us and Him—that is, our perfection—is manifested and grows. In the West the disputes about which is stronger in the relationship between grace and freedom occurred because grace was conceived of as an impersonal

force. In this case the impersonal force of grace can be either weaker or stronger than the force of the human person. But in the manifestation of power, there cannot be a competition between God as Person and the believer as person. If grace is the manifestation of the love of God, who is personal, it is natural for Him to seek to awaken our free love through His love. A loving person, even when he is stronger, as in this case, can limit the manifestation of his power so that he may make it possible for his neighbor to manifest himself freely, because such a loving person wants his neighbor's love. That person acts not by means of power but by love, which is also a power toward love for the person who accepts it freely. A person who approaches another person with love awakens in the latter his love as a free manifestation. The relationship of love is an accord between two freedoms. It is true that grace as the manifestation of God's love has precedence. However, this is not in order to attract us forcibly toward love but to solicit our love and to give us the power to feel God's love so that we may manifest ours; it allows us the freedom to respond either positively or negatively.

You cannot become free for good or for love except in relation with another person who encourages you to do good, inspires you in your aspirations toward good, and communicates powers that increase your powers to do good. This means that your own effort is necessary in order to use the freedom that is awakened in you, to maintain it, and to strengthen it so as to use the powers that have increased through the relationship with the other person.

The theological disputes in the West started from a very equivocal notion of freedom: from so-called free will, that is, freedom that would be absolutely neutral toward either good or evil. The problem was raised: When divine grace meets this freedom, which of the two will conquer, grace or freedom? In the case when freedom conquers, this is decided by freedom for the good; in the case when grace conquers, freedom is somehow led to the good by force (predestination). In either case true cooperation is not achieved—that is, true freedom is not obtained either through grace or through our will.

But absolutely neutral freedom, or free will, does not exist. There only exists a freedom that to a great extent serves evil (or a false freedom) and a freedom for the good. In the human person, given the weakness of his human nature or of his will, freedom is easily inclined toward evil things, or it has difficulty resisting temptations toward evil.

He cannot decide on his own for an exclusively good activity. Free will, or absolutely neutral freedom, is an arbitrary construct of our thinking. One cannot reach the freedom for the good, or the true freedom, without the help of a superior Person, even though at the same time a free effort on the part of him who is helped is necessary. The human person cannot reach true freedom, or the freedom for the good, either only on his own or forced by a superior Person.

True freedom is not the prerogative of either an isolated individual or someone enclosed in himself but of him who is in a loving relationship with God through the Spirit, a relationship for which on one hand he receives His help, and to which on the other hand he brings his own efforts in order to remain and even to grow in it. In the relationship with God and through His help, the human person is not estranged from himself, but it is precisely through this that he is truly realized. St. Maximus the Confessor says that God does not want to alter or to limit the human person's nature as He created it, nor is this nature altered in its accord with God, who created it, but it is authentically realized only through this accord. "For He [the Word] did not come to alter the nature that He, as God and Word, has made, but He came in order to deify it.[8] "For none of the natural things, such as nature itself, is opposed to the one who is the cause of nature."[9]

Cooperating with grace helps the human person to gain his true freedom all the more, as grace is the energy of Christ, through whom the human will has been truly reestablished. By cooperating with grace the human person is reestablished in his true humanity according to the likeness of Christ. Completing the words mentioned above, St. Maximus says, "And if He [the Word] had, as man, the natural will, He surely willed those that He, as God, implanted in nature when He established it through creation."[10]

C. Gifts as Workings of the Spirit

To the question of why the miracle of understanding other languages by him who is baptized no longer occurs, as happened with the apostles at Pentecost, St. John Chrysostom responds that there are both miracles that are visible to the eye and invisible miracles, the latter of which are felt in the consciousness or seen in a different way: "Among spiritual gifts, some are unseen and are perceived only through faith;

others are manifested through sensible signs for the persuasion of non-believers. For example, the forgiveness of sins is something spiritual, an invisible gift, because we do not see with our bodily eyes how sins are cleansed."[11] But the gifts that are not seen with the eyes are greater than the sensible ones: "Many gifts have often descended from heaven to earth for the benefit of the common race of mankind."[12] Some examples from before Christ's descent: the manna from heaven, the fire that consumed Elijah's sacrifice, and the rain that caused the earth to bring forth fruit after three years of drought. "Great and marvelous are these! But the present gifts are much greater. For it is not manna, fire, and rain that have come down, but a deluge of spiritual gifts. The clouds have opened not to cause the earth to bear fruit, but to move nature toward offering the fruit of its virtue to the Cultivator of men. [The earth has been filled with angels,] not with heavenly angels, but with heavenly powers that manifest their virtue in a human body."[13]

But how does one reconcile the Spirit's presence and the working as hypostasis in the Church with the partial gifts granted to various persons? This reconciliation is understandable if we consider the fact that the imparting of the tongues of fire among all the apostles, as well as the imparting of the multitude of different gifts, has—in addition to the significance that the Church is intended for all nations—significance as the reciprocal completion between various gifts and between those who receive them in accord with their natural attributes. And this is for the benefit of Church unity. If a single person were to receive everything from the Holy Spirit, he would no longer seek unity with others, just as if one apostle had received the gift of all languages, he would no longer have needed the others to be complete in his mission.

Thus the Spirit covers as hypostasis, or actualizes, the Church in her entirety, just as the soul covers or actualizes the totality of the body's functions with the totality of its functions, even though it is present entirely in every organ of the body, and thus it keeps all of them united. Likewise, the Spirit as hypostasis keeps all the members of the Church united. St. Basil the Great says, "The Spirit holds the members together through the gifts that depend upon each other. All members endowed with various gifts complete the body of Christ and, in the unity of the Spirit, transmit to each other the benefits of these gifts that are necessary to all, causing all to enjoy all the gifts."[14] But the members of the Church enjoy all the gifts only inasmuch as they

remain in the Church, or in the one body of Christ. Only in this way do the differences between them not lead to separations; rather, they are maintained in unity, because they need one another.

The Spirit as hypostasis is the Spirit who unifies those with different gifts; He is the Spirit of communion (2 Cor 13:14) and the Spirit of unity (Eph 4:3). Only because we are all "in the same Spirit" but different among ourselves are we all in Christ, and we have access through Him to the Father (Eph 2:18).

Only together or in a synodal manner were the apostles and their successors able to say this when making decisions on important matters of faith: "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28). They were many, but the Spirit was one, and in the Spirit they were of one mind. Better said, they were able to say this only in relationship with the whole Church, where the Spirit is and to where He also comes from above after His initial descent. Only within the entire body of the Church does every member partake, through the mediation of others, of the totality of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; thus he is enriched in his humanity by all the holiness of the Spirit, who makes possible the shining forth in the Church of the entirety of the holiness and deification of Christ's body. This helps us to understand that the Spirit, as hypostasis of the entire Godhead imparted to the created being, is granted to the Church in her identity as a unique body. Certainly, once present as hypostasis in the Church as a whole, He works as hypostasis in every one, but He is accorded to one person or another because that person remains in the Church.

In fact, only inasmuch as one person or another remains with his special gift in the Church, in relationship with the totality of the persons in the Church and with their gifts, does that person enjoy the plenitude of the Spirit, who is present and active as hypostasis in the Church.

The Spirit is the same undivided hypostasis found in the gift that is granted to one person, because such a gift is connected with all His other gifts that are granted to other persons in the Church. When speaking to one child and helping him to develop his gifts, a mother is the same person despite her varied speech and advice addressed to each child, and thus she keeps the children united, because she would not advise them toward contradictory acts among themselves. The whole Spirit is in every person in the Church, but only inasmuch as

that person remains a member of the Church—that is, only inasmuch as the person is in the Church, where all the gifts of the Spirit are activated, the gifts of the Spirit as the unique and infinitely rich hypostasis who is the unifying factor of the bestowed gifts.

This relationship means that each member of the Church is bound to the other persons and responsible for them, because he is bound to the Church as a whole and has obligations toward her; he thus has access to the whole Spirit and is obligated to aid in His actualization as a whole, in all the gifts He grants. Thus each feels that he is in Christ's fullness at the same time, and that he is obligated to aid in the entire Christ's activation through the Church.

This applies to Christ as well, for the working of the Spirit is the very work of Christ—a work that has, through the Spirit, become proper to the human subject. That is why it is said of Christ that "the Lamb of God is broken and shared, broken but not divided" (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom).[15] Properly speaking, each person participates in the whole Spirit and in the whole Christ. St. Gregory Palamas says, "Therefore the Spirit is by nature incommunicable, but according to [His] working . . . [He] who is everywhere present and is firmly established in the immovable identity is poured, given, and sent; the Spirit is communicable to those who are worthy."[16]

The Spirit does not only impart various gifts in the Church, but He is also present entirely in each person as He works in him, and as a connecting factor with the other gifts. Every gift calls for other gifts, because in such a gift there is the same Spirit who maintains in that gift the tendency toward unity with the other gifts. That is why every person who has a gift feels that his particular gift is a part of the other gifts on account of the Spirit, who is in all.

A most remarkable quality of a member of the Church is called "gift" not only because the Spirit bestows it but also because it is destined to serve others, to become a gift for others. What else would the human person do with it? He would use it egoistically against others. But in this way that quality would not be fully beneficial, nor would the person who had it be able to grow. Through the gift of one person, the Spirit addresses Himself to another one. The gift has not only a vertical destination but also a horizontal, unifying one. Through the gift the Spirit unites one human person with another, because He is the Spirit of all, the Spirit of communion.

Thus the Spirit is present in the whole Church as a unitary and unifying hypostasis, which means that He is also in every member, while that particular member remains a member of the Church.

Because of this, through each gift a person performs an act not just for himself but also for the whole; he performs a working in common with the others by uniting his gift with that of others, as St. John Chrysostom says: "The reason is that every one of our members has both a working of its own and one which is common; and likewise there is in us a beauty which is peculiar and another which is common."[17] Properly speaking, the working that is proper to each member is also a common working, because it could not be achieved without the contribution of all and without that member contributing, through his working, to the working of others, as well as to the sustenance and development of the whole. Thus the Spirit is wholly present with His unitary hypostatic working in the distinct gifts and workings of the different persons in the Church.

In virtue of the Spirit's presence and working as a unitary hypostasis in the gifts of the Church's different members, they "appear indeed to be divided, but they are perfectly bound together, and when one is destroyed, the other perishes also along with it."[18]

In the Church the Holy Spirit is a sort of link and dynamic common source for all the gifts, a sort of water from which the true gifts of all her members spring and grow, gifts that are just as many manifestations of the divine life united with their human life. St. Basil the Great says, "The Holy Spirit is often called the link between those who are sanctified,"[19] that is, between those who overcome their egoistic limitation—which is contrary to other human persons and to God—and who open themselves up with sincerity and purity to the communication with Christ's all-pure life of endless love, and thus to the loving relationship with their fellow human beings. The Holy Spirit opens one person toward the other and makes them communicate.

The Spirit is the "link" of love between each believer and God and between him and his neighbors, as well as the living source from which the gifts of all members spring and grow in unity. And these gifts are so many forms in which the members can manifest their love toward God and among themselves, so many forms through which they surpass themselves and overcome their individual limitations, realizing a continuous progress in the endless unity of love that is strongly connected

with holiness. Thus the Holy Spirit is the spring of love, and as such He never ceases to renew and enrich us.

Vladimir Lossky supposed that the Holy Spirit's working, distinct from that of Christ, consists in imprinting a different aspect in every person in the Church, while Christ unites all in their unity of nature, which He has in common with the other human persons.[20]

We see how much these distinct gifts that the different persons possess are the channels through which they communicate among themselves, maintaining and developing a unity of love among themselves. The Holy Fathers strongly emphasize the Spirit's unifying working in this sense. Certainly, as has been said before, this unifying working does not nullify the persons, for in that case the unity among them would no longer be accompanied by the feeling of joy from giving and receiving.

On the other hand Christ must not be seen as one who achieves only a unity of nature between Himself and human persons in the Church. Even though He is the divine hypostasis of our nature, and therefore a hypostasis with a human consciousness that is open to the supreme degree toward others, Christ still fulfills the function of a human person who is distinct from others. Regardless of how much human persons were to open themselves one toward the other, following Christ's example and from His power, they would still remain aware of being persons without confusion, like the Persons of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, by bringing human persons to unity with Him based on their unity of nature with Him, Christ does not confuse them.

Properly speaking, Christ's working is one with the Holy Spirit's working in the Church. The Holy Spirit imprints the divine working that is one with Christ's working upon the interior of human subjects; He imprints the image of Christ deeply in everyone without thereby confusing these persons or making them uniform.

The incarnate Son's divine hypostasis and the Holy Spirit's divine hypostasis in their working in us take into consideration the specific character of each one of us, allowing us to remain distinct hypostases, just as the hypostases of the Holy Trinity are distinct.[21]

The Son's hypostasis, as an incarnate hypostasis, has also become the fundamental hypostasis, or the hypostasis-head, of the Church,[22] but He works from within the Church in every member according to His personal specificity. The Spirit's hypostasis, although found as

hypostasis in the Church, does not become a hypostasis in the sense in which the incarnate Son does, because He was not incarnate as the Son was within human nature, through which He can extend His Incarnation within the human persons, that is, within the Church. But given that since the incarnate Son's Ascension the interpenetration of the Spirit with the Son has also been achieved with the Son as man, the Spirit also accomplishes a sort of interpenetration with Christ in His quality as a hypostasis who is extended with His personal body into the body of the Church. He thus extends the Son's relationship with the Father to the Son's mystical body as well.

Through this an intimate interweaving of the Church with the Holy Trinity takes place—an interweaving that will become perfect in the life to come.

Nevertheless, the human person's pneumatization is also a matter of decision and of his persistence in the good, and it has a note of personal specificity. The Spirit develops every person in what is specific to him through creation insofar as that person becomes spiritualized by developing himself, but the Spirit develops him, or he becomes developed as a person, or as a member of the whole. The Spirit also develops him through his effort to realize what he himself is.

We certainly form a mere "drop" in relation to the God of the Trinity, a drop of dew. But in this drop is mirrored the entire divine sun, and it is protected and beautified by this sun, thereby receiving an inestimable value; it is the same with everyone who is a part of this drop. If we experience with the whole intensity of our existence the sun's light that is mirrored in us, we receive this value in what is specific in us. The divine, personal infinitude, the great infinitude, has created a sort of a "small infinitude" dependent on Him, which He fills with His entire splendor.

If the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, They work together in Their dwelling in the Church, or in the believers, but They are not confused. Likewise, if the Son is in the Spirit and the Spirit is in the Son, They are united in Their presence and working in the Church, but They are not confused.[23]

But it is the Holy Spirit who makes the common working of the Father, of the Son, and of His own proper to the Church community in the totality of its forms and proper to the subjects, in human forms according to their personal specificity.

The human person is pneumatized in the intimate and conscious relation with the Person of Christ, who is the model according to which he guides himself and which attracts him. But he is also pneumatized with the Holy Spirit as a life-giving, personal force with whom on one hand he feels almost unified, and on the other hand distinct, because he cannot attribute to himself the amount of force that he is able to put into action.

It is true that the Spirit is thus the one who guarantees a lasting value for human persons in their distinct reality. This is a value that increases even more through our cooperation with the working of the Spirit.

But the working whose subject develops the human person is on the other hand the working of the entire Godhead, accepted through the person's self-renunciation; it is not only the working of the Spirit but also that of the Son, for the Son gives the human person the power for self-renunciation through His sacrifice.

As can be seen, in the gift not only the Holy Spirit's working is involved but also the human person's act of assuming Him and sometimes even his predisposition for this gift, which also involves his effort to develop, with the Spirit's help, his predisposition or capacity.[24] This makes it possible that the gift, as the effect of the Holy Spirit's working, includes something proper to human nature. The uncreated divine working does not remain solitary. When we speak of the uncreated working, we understand that the gift that the Christian enjoys cannot be explained without the causality of a divine uncreated working, and that this causality is not supernatural but created, as Roman Catholic theology states. The Spirit Himself, in Person, moves the believer toward cooperation and strengthens him to receive and to make use of a gift, or to develop it through a natural disposition.

That is why it is not wrong to attribute the gifts to the Holy Spirit Himself. However, the gift is not just a "working" or "operation" (ἐνέργεια) of the Holy Spirit but also the effect of this working (ἐνέργημα)[25] in human nature—an effect that cannot exist without being assumed by, and thus without the cooperation of, the human person. The strength of the effect lasts as long as this cooperation exists. That is why the Holy Apostle Paul speaks of both gifts and workings of the Spirit, as there cannot be a separation between "working," "co-working," and "effect." There is dynamism in the gift itself as effect. But there should be no

separation between worker and working.[26] Consequently, the effect is also a product of the working divine hypostasis and of the co-working human hypostasis. However, something of the resulting effect remains sometimes even after the co-working of the human person—and thus the working of the Spirit—has ceased. There remains something that was imprinted upon nature; there remains a state that one has passed beyond, but to which he cannot return. This offers something of an explanation for the fact that the human person does not return to the original sin after falling from grace, or after the working of the Holy Spirit and the co-working of the human person cease.

When one gift or another has increased considerably, it becomes a *charisma. This means a very accentuated pneumatization of a person,* an accentuated overwhelming of the natural laws by the human spirit filled with the Holy Spirit.

Generally, all the members of the Church who strengthen their faith through virtues come to possess certain distinct gifts by which they become useful to one another and to the Church, and by which they are more strongly united among themselves, thus strengthening the unity of the Church. Some of them, by advancing more in virtues and thereby attaining degrees of holiness, also come to possess certain charismas through which they serve both others and the unity of the Church even more. Through them the infinity of the divine life and light becomes transparent. From them shines forth a power that often overcomes the powers of nature.

CHAPTER 6

THE HUMAN PERSON'S SALVATION WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST

A. Righteousness, Justification, Growth, and Ascent in the Spirit

The main term used in Holy Scripture and Church tradition for the purpose and outcome of Christ's work concerning the human person is that of "salvation." This word is used almost two hundred times in the New Testament. In the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed the Church confesses that the Son of God was incarnate, crucified, risen, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, "for us men and for our salvation." As the one who fulfilled this saving work, Jesus Christ is called "Savior," which is the term used most frequently next to that of "Lord." Even the name "Jesus" means "Savior."

The meanings included in the term "salvation" are rendered in the New Testament by scores of other terms that at the same time indicate the phases of salvation up to the final phase: resurrection and eternal life. Here are some of these terms: death with Christ for sin, and the pledge of resurrection and eternal life with Him (Rom 6:4–5; 8:11–12; Col 3:1); the destruction of "the body of sin," "that we should no longer be slaves of sin" (Rom 6:6–7); the true "life" in Christ for God (Rom 6:10; Gal 2:20; Phil 1:21); the life in "holiness" (Rom 6:19, 22; Col 1:22); the dwelling of Christ and the Spirit of life in him who is saved (Rom 8:9–11; 1 Cor 3:17; 6:19); the status as children of God

(Rom 8:14–17, 23; Gal 4:7); the prospect of being glorified in Christ (Rom 8:18, 21); the imprinting of Christ's image, the likeness of the Son of God, in those who are saved (Rom 8:29; Gal 3:27; 4:7); putting on Christ (Rom 13:4; Gal 3:27); walking in newness of life (Rom 6:4); living and walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:25); the quality as members of Christ, as part of His body (1 Cor 12:27); the knowledge of the glory of God in the earthen vessel that is our body (2 Cor 4:6–7); the new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17); living in righteousness instead of lawlessness (2 Cor 6:14); fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3; 1 Cor 1:9); the communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14); partaking of the divine nature (1 Pet 1:4); having access to the Father through Christ (Eph 2:18); being members of the household of God (Eph 2:19); being stones in the dwelling place of Christ (Eph 2:21–22, 1 Pet 2:5); being rooted and grounded in Christ's love (Eph 3:17); being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of God (1 Pet 1:23; 1 John 3:9); and so on.

The human person obtains the state of salvation through grace, and he develops it in the Church through good deeds and gifts.

There is a complete solidarity, or a complementarity, among the numerous terms that express the state of salvation. The meaning of each implies the meanings understood through the others.

In Western Christianity the term "righteousness" stands out from among all the terms through which salvation is characterized. In the East, however, the meaning of "righteousness" is understood in solidarity with the other terms.

Western Christianity has understood the state of righteousness as a relationship of external peace between the human person and God. In this peace God has saved the human person from His wrath because Christ satisfied His honor, which was offended through man's disobedience. In Scholasticism the human person's state of righteousness in Christ has thus become his "justified" state, in which he is absolved of God's penalty and accepted into a relationship of peace with Him, following the judicial act of satisfaction that Christ accomplished through His voluntary death for the offense that the human person brought to God's honor. Protestantism has brought this conception to its ultimate consequences. Whereas in Catholicism the person who is accepted into relationship with God as a result of justification enjoys, on the basis of this relationship, the gift of created grace

that helps him to live a life without sin, in Protestantism justification has no consequence in the human person's life. He knows that he is justified—that is, forgiven—on account of the atonement that Christ offered on his behalf, but he continues to be as he formerly was: a sinner entirely unchanged.[1]

In its will to attribute this reduced and external meaning to salvation, Western Christianity's juridical spirit has retained the single term *righteousness*, which is used a few times by St. Paul, from the richness of terms through which the Holy Apostles Paul, John, and Peter describe the human person's new state in Christ. Righteousness has been understood in a principally juridical sense by Catholicism and in an exclusively juridical sense by Protestantism. When salvation is reduced to this juridical significance, the human person could have obtained salvation of his own accord. Consequently, in this line of thought there is no longer any need for the Church as the body of Christ (Protestantism), or the Church has been lowered to the role of an institution that distributes created grace, through which the quality of justification is attributed to individuals because of the satisfaction brought by Christ, whose merit in the form of created grace has been given to the Church for distribution.

The teaching about "justification" has thus become the principal chapter of Western dogmatic doctrine regarding the subjective appropriation of salvation.

In Catholicism created grace, which is found in a depository at the disposal of the Church—but which is not linked intimately to her being as the mystical body of Christ, filled with the body of Christ and with the Holy Spirit, who shines forth from Him in and around her—could be treated as a self-standing reality.

The juridical spirit of Western Christian thought has ignored the fact that the Holy Apostle Paul rarely expressed the teaching that salvation in Christ is an attribution of Christ's righteousness to the human person. St. Paul only expressed this in his polemic with the Judaizers, who—maintaining the Judaic tradition of the Pharisees—considered that they were saved through the righteousness that they themselves would gain through their deeds. Even Christ contrasted such *righteousness*, which the Pharisees considered that they themselves would gain, with "the righteousness of God" (cf. Matt 6:33). Following this example, St. Paul contrasts "the righteousness which is from God"

(Phil 3:9) with "the righteousness which is in the law" of the Judaizers (Phil 3:6).

Because the Judaizers were propagandizing among the Christians in order to promote the understanding of salvation as a righteousness that man himself obtains by fulfilling the commandments of the old law, the issue arose: "How does one obtain salvation? By organizing one's life around the law and by obeying its commandments, or by the raising of man to a new mode of existence, which the apostle calls new creation, 'life in Christ,' 'adoption,' 'inheritance of the heavenly kingdom,' 'co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with Christ,' 'putting on Christ.'"[2] St. Paul calls this new way of life, which is the only one leading to salvation, "the righteousness which is from God" (Phil 3:9). It enters into the human person at the same time as the faith in Christ and develops from it; or rather, it comes from the personal Christ as a source of infinite love and power, and it is not a quality that the human person in conceited isolation acquires through his deeds. According to St. Paul, "Faith in Christ makes a man righteous precisely because it is a new life in Christ, who alone makes him alive."[3] For even a person gives a certain amount of life to another person; and the Person of Christ, as the supreme Person with an infinite life, is the only one who communicates an infinite life to the human person. Through faith, as a relationship between the human person and Christ as Person, Christ Himself comes to dwell within man, and He is the one who saves him because He makes the human person after His image (Rom 8:29); He makes him able to lead a life in the Spirit and not in the body, that is, a life in the horizon of the Spirit's infinite life.

The Holy Apostle Paul thus gives "the righteousness which is from God" a plenary, rich sense, a sense of new life whose source is in Christ, who is in us and who gives us this new life through His Spirit; however, this requires our effort as well. This can be seen when looking at the context in which the term "righteousness" is used most of the time. Here is an example of this sense: "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom 8:10–11). Our body is dead in regard to the tendencies toward sin, but precisely through this it is alive for the pure feelings from the power of the Spirit of Christ, who

died and rose again and who dwells in us. The Spirit of Christ moves the body through its own spirit, which is already risen in Christ, in order to assimilate the righteousness that comes from Christ.

Whereas he who regulates his life through the law lives an individualistic existence—an existence in relation to an impersonal norm whose fulfillment depends on himself—he who has Christ in him has Christ Himself as a living norm and source of power, and that is why he can lead a life of communion with Christ from the power of Christ.

Protestantism intended to make apparent the fact that the Christian is saved through Christ as Person, not through a law fulfilled by the human person individually through his own efforts. By considering man's salvation as a simple judicial declaration on his part, as a *right* because of the price Christ paid on the cross, Protestantism has weakened the permanent relationship between the person who is saved and the eternally alive and loving Christ. The human person's salvation is no longer considered to have been effected through his continuous relationship with Christ but through a value paid through a past act against the people's continual sins.

In this view the entirety of salvation refers to this past act, valuable in itself, not to the Person of Christ in permanent communion with us. This devaluation of salvation from its significance as the human person's transformation, achieved in the personal relationship with Christ, has also taken place in Catholicism, where the Church valued Christ's "merit" as an impersonal treasure of created grace that He gained through the satisfaction given to God on the cross.

In other places in St. Paul's Epistles, the following terms have the same plenary, transformative, and ontological meaning: "the righteousness of God" (δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ) and "transformation into the state of righteousness" (δικαίωσις). He says, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor 5:21). In Christ humanity is *the true righteousness*, the incarnation of righteousness; and we, because we are in Him, are also righteousness in the same plenary and ontological sense in which He is. That is why St. Paul asks us "not to receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Cor 6:1) but to lead a life without sin in the Holy Spirit. The grace given to us because of Christ becomes a cause "of obedience leading to righteousness"; we are no longer slaves to sin, for "having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Rom 6:16, 18).

Evidently, *righteousness is a state opposed to the state of sin.* He who has received the grace of Christ no longer has to present his members "as slaves of uncleanness . . . [but] now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness" (Rom 6:19). Righteousness is the comprehensive name for the state contrary to the state of sin.

He who receives the state of righteousness through Christ has the power to no longer commit sin, as was not the case with those seeking righteousness through the works of the law, that is, through their own power. If he who has received the state of righteousness through Christ's dwelling in him were to commit sin out of necessity, this would mean that Christ, who dwells in him, is also a sinner: "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed [the life in sin], I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:17–20). Christ is in me the source of the new life without sin, because He Himself is without sin and full of divine life.

I could not have gained righteousness with my own deeds, because I had only my power. That is why I died because of breaking the law, being subjected to the condemnatory power of the law. But now I live because Christ Himself lives in me, and out of His power I can fulfill the law. "For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God" (Gal 2:19). Only by becoming alive and strong in Christ can I truly fulfill everything that the law commands as good. For "the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good . . . But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good" (Rom 7:12–13). But by receiving grace we are able to avoid sin and therefore to avoid breaking the law: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not!" (Rom 6:1–2).

The righteousness that we have through grace is the mode in which grace is actualized in a sinless life, a life through which we advance toward eternal life through Jesus Christ, the sustainer and source of righteousness in us. "So that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 5:21).

In summary, *Christ became our righteousness.* However, His righteousness was not an external righteousness but an internal one, for we are in Him (1 Cor 1:30). He gives us power to be righteous, after His likeness.

This biblical sense of righteousness was soundly described by Nicholas Cabasilas. According to him, God's righteousness, which is distributed to our nature in Christ, is the plenitude of the divine life's goodness and harmony—that is, a way of life similar to that of God.[4] The human person created in the image of God reflects in himself the beauty and harmony of this righteousness. Certain remnants of it remained even after his Fall into sin. In Christ it is granted in full first to His human nature, then from it to those who believe in Him; thus "God's laws"[5] are completely reestablished first in the nature He assumed and then in those who believe. Before Christ the law could not be completely fulfilled, because people did not live spiritually. "The law . . . was weak through the flesh" (Rom 8:3). But when in Christ "the law of the Spirit" became fully "operative" (ἐνεργὸς), then the law was fully observed.[6] In fact, it was Christ who "fulfilled all righteousness."[7] But this "righteousness" of God, which is also the ultimate meaning of the law, is one in essence with His love.[8]

This righteousness, which is essential to the divine life, has also been implanted by the Son of God in His human nature. He who is the life and the righteousness "makes those who cleave to Him holy . . . [He] not only instructs them and teaches them what is necessary . . . but also He Himself becomes for them 'righteousness from God and sanctification' (1 Cor 1:30)."[9] Christ does not give a law of righteousness to be observed by the human being as in the Old Testament, but He makes Himself the source of righteousness, giving to those who believe in Him

> the power to conform themselves to Him, as a model in which all righteousness is clearly made concrete and realized . . . Human nature was deified, being enhypostasized in God the Word. It was adopted by God when it became the body of the Son. It was placed in a state of righteousness [ἐδικαιώθη] because it had as hypostasis the one who is righteous *par excellence*. By becoming the new hypostasis, the new subject of man, the Word has enlightened man from within through His righteousness "and adapted the whole human race to Himself."[10] And His whole

> human race, the Church, is righteous and lives righteously, being united with Him who is righteous. The state of righteousness is not, therefore, an external gift, nor is it a superficial state of the human being. The Savior, as Son and image of the Father and as His righteousness, also became man's righteousness, because He has raised man from being a slave to being a son . . . Christ is personally the righteousness of man, because in Him the eternal and uncreated hypostasis has been granted to man.[11]

In Christ our nature was renewed and carried to resurrection. This is "the supernatural dimension of its righteousness."[12]

This "righteousness" shines forth from the body of Christ in all those who cleave to Him through faith and who use the power that comes from faith to become after His image: "The Lord's deified body, placed in a state of righteousness, glorified, resurrected, and raised up to heaven, is communicated through the sacred mysteries and remains forever present and alive in creation through the Spirit, and as such is called Church . . . In this way the Church is 'the blessed [extended] body of the Lord.' Concentrated in this body that is in a state of righteousness (ἐν τῇ δικαιωθείσῃ σαρκί), the believers also gain the state of righteousness (δικαιοῦνται). In the Church creation is raised up to the state of righteousness."[13]

Salvation is understood not as justification attributed juridically to those who believe in God, or distributed by the Church from the deposit of created grace earned by Christ, but as a new life that shines forth directly from the sanctified and risen body in the members of Christ's mystical body, which is the Church—that is, as an effect of the personal communion between the faithful and Christ. Thus salvation is not an external, juridical, and static position but a new quality in a continuous development of the human person.

But the human person obtains the new life as a pledge for the eternal life. Should he die immediately after baptism, he would enter into eternal life. But if he lives he must develop the new life instilled in him at baptism, on one hand through the other mysteries, and on the other hand through his own efforts. The new life granted at baptism—a life extended from Christ through the Spirit—has potentially in itself the supreme levels that the human person will reach in the eternal life. The human person actualizes them through a movement of continuous ascent.

Just as someone who enters into a positive relationship with another person has potentially in this relationship all that person's warmth and attention, but only in persevering in this relationship are the gradual powers of this warmth and attention communicated to him, so it is with the human person's relationship with Christ, into which he enters at baptism. St. Mark the Ascetic says,

> But even he who receives praise from the Lord should make use of right judgment and should know exactly that as much as someone has fought against his unbelief, as much as he has advanced in the faith, as much good as he has gained—not only through simple knowledge but also through working—he has not found, nor will he find, anything more than what he has mystically received through baptism. And this is Christ Himself. For it is said, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" [Gal 3:27]. Christ, being perfect God, has granted to those who were baptized the Spirit's perfect grace, which received nothing extra from us, but He reveals and shows Himself to us according to how we fulfill the commandments. Thus we increase in faith "till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" [Eph 4:13]. Therefore, anything we would bring to Him after we were born anew has been hidden beforehand by Him within us, according to what has been written: "'For who has known the mind of the Lord? . . . Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to Him?' For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things" [Rom 11:34–36].[14]

In baptism Christ has come to dwell in us with everything that His "mind" comprises in regard to the goal to which He wants to take us. Only because Christ Himself as Person, with all the infinity He has as Person, is found in the grace given to us through baptism, nothing else is added to us afterward; however, He is also actualized as a result of our efforts. Indeed, in the Eucharist the same entire Christ is also given to us in a different mode, so that He might permeate us with His sacrificed body and blood as well.

The content of this plan concerning us—as well as the power that we have at our disposal in Christ, who comes to dwell in us through baptism—is actualized, revealed, and assimilated by us in a gradual movement in which we in fact have to utilize the power offered to us;

this power actualizes and gradually increases our power as well. Therefore we concretely make progress, even if we do so in what is potentially implanted in us.

St. Paul writes many times about our progress. He admits the following about himself in a general way: "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13–14). And this goal means having perfectly gained Christ in an actualized way; for this He gave up everything. Only by having Him does the apostle not have the law's arrogant righteousness, which is lifeless, but the righteousness that comes from God, which is the power to die to everything and to know in himself the power of Christ's Resurrection. Thus the apostle has the power to run the race, through self-renunciation and through an ever more complete life in and with Christ, until the resurrection from the dead: "That I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:8–11).

The Holy Apostle Paul generally views the Christian life as a race neatly ordered toward the crown of eternal life in Christ. And this race is on one hand the controlling of passions, and on the other hand a working from Christ's love and a partaking of it: "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it . . . Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Cor 9:24, 26–27), "that I may be a partaker" of Christ (1 Cor 9:23; see also 2 Tim 4:6–8).

The state of righteousness, which will culminate in the state of glory, is the state that is right for the human person. As a crowning state of glory it has been openly manifested for the first time in the face of Christ as man. And through the direct relationship with Him, through looking at Him, that state is gradually extended to the faces of all who gaze at Him with love and who show their love by fulfilling

His commandments. That state of glory is no longer covered for them, or not communicated to them, as it was covered by a cloth over Moses' face. It is really incorporated in Christ as man and therefore communicated. For God Himself has entered through Christ into a direct relationship with us, and He no longer frightens us through His distance. The glory of God that is manifested in Christ's face is God's endless love that has entered into a direct relationship with us and arrived among us with its supreme condescension. Any truly loving person communicates a certain glory and power to those with whom he enters into a relationship. Christ's glory—communicated to those of us who are in a relationship with Him by believing in Him—is endless and does not frighten us; rather, it manifests a great intimacy toward us. Those who behold Christ and persevere in communion with Him become increasingly more "righteous," more imbued with Christ's glory, with Christ Himself as model: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor 3:18).

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Holy Apostle Paul shows that the growth of Christians in union with Christ depends directly on the work of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the edification of the body of Christ, in which the "equipping [that is, perfection or completion] of the saints" is effectuated, "till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:11–13).

Especially in his two writings *The Life of Moses* and *An Accurate Exposition of the Song of Songs*, St. Gregory of Nyssa dwelled extensively on the "forward tension" (*epektasis*) of Christians, of which the Holy Apostle Paul also spoke (Phil 3:13). The progress in good or in Christ is infinite: "For evil has no place and the good is boundless."[15] This pertains to the nature of God. But of this quality he who remains in communion with God can also partake. "We now see the bride being led by the Word up a rising staircase by the steps of virtue to the heights of perfection."[16] In the mystery of endless love is hidden the mystery of the personal God's infinitude.

If God exists always in absolute perfection or endless love due to His nature's unchangeability, then our created nature can move, owing to its changeability, from good to evil, or from evil to good—or,

further yet, to greater evil, in the same way that it can move from good to greater good. We cannot be immutable except in the sense that we only move toward the better and toward the highest levels of the good. In this way we can partake of this immutability of the ongoing movement toward the better, and in this sense we also have a share in infinitude. Properly speaking, our nature yearns for this, and thus it is authentically realized. This is the movement in conformity with our nature because it unites us more and more with our nature's model; it unites us with the Logos become man, with the man most completely realized in the most complete conformity with the divine Logos, with the Logos of this nature. In our nature's aspiration to infinitely advance in the good, or in love, there is again hidden the mystery of our relationship with God, who calls us to advance in the infinitude of His love: "The Word desires us who are changeable by nature not to fall into evil, but by constant progress in perfection, we are to use our mutability as an ally in our ascent towards higher things, and by the changeability of our nature we are to establish it immovably in the good. Therefore, the Song, like a teacher or protector from evil, mentions beasts that have been conquered. Thus by turning from evil, we are to strengthen our immutability in the good. While not ceasing our progress towards the good, we do not fall into evil."[17]

The progress toward the most complete likeness with Christ cannot be effected except in the Church, because through the Church is made known "the manifold wisdom of God . . . according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph 3:10–11). This is because in the Church there is actualized, in the multitude of her teachings, prayers, and members, the multitude of powers, workings, and forms of God's love, with everyone learning from and being propelled by this multiplicity:

> The manifold quality of wisdom which arose from a union of opposites is now clearly manifested through the Church: the Word becomes flesh, life is mixed with death, by his own bruises [Christ] heals our wound, brings down the adversary's power by the weakness of the cross, the invisible is manifested in flesh, Christ redeems captives. He himself is the one who purchases and has become the price itself (for he gave himself as a ransom for us into death). Christ is in death, and life does not depart from him, and he becomes a slave yet remains a

> king. All these and similar examples are manifold works of wisdom. The bridegroom's friends learn through the Church and are "given heart" to understand another aspect of the divine wisdom in mystery. If I may put it more boldly, by contemplating the bridegroom's beauty in his spouse, they are marvelling at his invisible, incomprehensible presence in all creatures. "No one has ever seen God," as John says [1 Jn 4.12], nor as Paul testifies, can anyone see him [1 Tim 6.16]. He has made the Church his own body, and by those who have been saved, God builds it up in love until we all reach the perfect man in the "measure of the age of the fulness of Christ" [Eph 4.13]. Therefore, if the Church is Christ's body with Christ as its head, he forms its countenance with his own features. Possibly the bridegroom's friends saw this and were "given heart" because they looked more closely at that which is invisible. In the same way, one cannot look at the sun but must behold its brightness in water. Thus persons looking into the Church's face as if it were a clean mirror see the Sun of Righteousness [Mal 4.2] who is comprehended by that which is visible.[18]

In the Church "all these and similar examples" are seen neither statically nor in an external mimicry, but Christ Himself continuously experiences them in the Church; He stimulates the Church to experience them by imprinting Himself upon her and in her faithful as members of His body, and thereby imprinting on them the mode of reexperiencing the stages through which He raised His assumed human nature. The Church is the communitarian human medium in which Christ experiences over and over again His saving action—the medium in which each of His members is on a different level of ascent but all are in the same Christ, who descended to each one's level. Being one and the same, Christ maintains all of them in unity and in communion, but each person experiences Him at a different level even though all the levels are expressed in the same teaching words, in the same sanctifying acts, in the same good works, and in the same prayers. Each person takes power for his ascent from all; some do so by receiving knowledge and an example from their superiors, others by engaging themselves in the communion with others in service and humility. For no one considers himself as having reached the goal but considers the difference in levels insignificant in comparison with the infinite summit of the goal.

In other words, one cannot progress in the relationship with the supreme Person of the Word, become accessible as man, except by making progress in loving relationship with the community of the faithful, where Christ finds Himself dwelling in bodily form, strengthening its unity. Through Christ's total humanity—His totally deified humanity, which is humanity open to all in the maximum degree—we have access and power for access to all person's humanity and vice versa; through all persons' humanity, regarded in unity and equally loved, we have access to Christ's humanity, full of the Godhead in which it is comprised. The progress in His humanity is infinite, for through it one advances into the infinite divine light and love; by advancing in them, our humanity itself increases in them.

The God who is immutable in goodness descended to our level through creation and especially through the Incarnation. He accepted the possibility of passing from stage to stage with us so that as man He might ascend together with us in the infinitude of the Godhead by which His humanity was assumed. Through His descent He made Himself our ladder, ascending together with us. "Because Christ is by nature both God and man, we receive Him as God according to grace in an incomprehensible way through the ineffable partaking of Him. And as a man who has assumed us, becoming like us for our sake, He receives Himself [as man] to Himself [as God], together with us, through His incomprehensible descent. Having seen Him mystically beforehand in the Spirit, the saints have understood that the glory in Christ, which will be manifested in the future following the virtues, must be preceded in the present time by suffering in Him for the virtuous life."[19]

Christ, who loves those in need and those with a limited understanding, descends to their level. He communicates to them broad sketches of the richness of His wisdom, and He bends with them under their burdens so that they are not exempt from these burdens, through which they are strengthened, but neither does He allow them to succumb to these burdens. In this way He ascends together with them. Were He to ease their burdens without their participation, they would not have the occasion to grow through that participation; and were they not to rise to a superior understanding, helped by His participation in their burdens, they would not fortify their mind for the real understanding of His loving Person, nor would they understand all the reasons and depth of His love.

The Holy Fathers depicted in various ways the spiritual ascent of the faithful in Christ. We have such depictions from Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor, John Climacus, Symeon the New Theologian, Nicholas Cabasilas, Callistus, Ignatius, and others.

B. The Human Person's Rebirth and the Indwelling of Christ

The preparation for the human person's rebirth and the indwelling of Christ, or of His grace, has various forms. The preparation of those baptized on the day of Pentecost began with the words of St. Peter, who made Christ known to them. These words "cut [them] to the heart" and provoked in them the desire to be saved by being attached to Christ. St. Peter urged them to repent for their previous way of life (Acts 2:37–38). Their question "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) arose from their awakened consciousness; they realized that without Christ there would be no escape for them from eternal death. Only after this realization were they baptized.

St. Paul's preparation was provoked by the direct appearance of Christ, and it continued through prayer and through the relationship he established with Ananias, a disciple of the apostles (Acts 9:10–18). The Ethiopian eunuch felt the need to be baptized following the words of the deacon Philip, who awoke in him the faith in Christ (Acts 8:26–39). Both Saul and the eunuch were baptized following this preparation.

Even the apostles prepared for the reception of the Holy Spirit by spending three years with Jesus and by praying for ten days in the upper room.

The adherents of certain sects believe that this preparation itself is everything, and they either do not accept baptism or reduce it to a simple ceremony by which they make known their inner and prior "conversion."

Diadochos of Photiki makes a distinction between the working of grace on the human person during the phase preparing him for his rebirth and the working of grace that begins with the rebirth. The distinction is that before rebirth grace acts upon him from outside the soul, whereas through rebirth grace comes to dwell within the soul itself. On the contrary, Satan acts within the soul up to the time of baptism, whereas from that moment on he acts from outside of it.[20]

This can be understood as follows: up to the time of baptism, the human person feels the impulse to emerge from his egoistic entrapment, but he cannot realize this impulse. From the moment of baptism, the grace of Christ greatly strengthens the human person's decision to break away from the prison of his egoism, so that he in fact manages to do so. Given that the goal of this preparation is the human person's opening to Christ, in the case of children from Christian families the preparation is assured by their family environment.

One could say that before baptism the soul is moved by grace, by the environment that radiates from the Church. Through baptism Christ can dwell in the very soul of the human person who is prepared in this way. Before baptism the Spirit of Christ acts upon the human person especially through the word of a believer who is a member of the Church and who has the Spirit in him. Certainly, this action is not just action through words, but also through the conviction with which he speaks and through his life that is surrendered to Christ. That is why Niketas Stethatos places the service of the word on the fourth level, which is the highest step of the spiritual life, with the first being the purification from passions; the second, the contemplation of God through creation; and the third, the dwelling of the Holy Trinity within the soul.[21] In order to create an inner state of preparation in those who have not yet attached themselves to Christ, the word that calls such a person to Christ must start from the Church's plenitude, in which the death with Christ and the pledge of His Resurrection are experienced. Consequently, the human person's preparation occurs alongside the Church, through the power of Christ, who shines forth from her; it is a preparation with a view toward his entrance into the Church.

The human person's rebirth in Christ, or Christ's indwelling as a spiritual event, is produced through the mystery of baptism and is equivalent to the human person's entrance into the mystical body of Christ, or into the Church. It consists on one hand of the annihilation of the original sin and of the other sins committed out of the weakness that the original sin maintains, and on the other hand of the dwelling of Christ, or of His grace, within the soul—an indwelling that is equivalent to the beginning of a new life in the human person. The walls of the human person's spiritual prison are torn down, and he enters into the circuit of Christ's endless love, manifested in the communion of the Church. At that moment the Spirit of Christ, as well as His

ity, is intimately introduced into the human subject, and thus he feels the tendency toward union with Christ in love, and toward the works of love as his proper tendency, even though this tendency comes from Christ; he also feels the opposite, temptation being stirred up in his soul by an unseen enemy.

But he now feels that he belongs to Christ (Rom 14:8). Now the human person's life in purity begins as a result of the power of Christ dwelling in him, just as the life of sin, imprinted as a powerful potentiality in his being, was due to the relationship in which he lived with Satan, the enemy of God. The enemy of God made human nature an instrument of his will through the human person's prolonged obedience to him. Now the human person denounces his relationship with that enemy. And Christ utilizes this decision of the human person—to attach his will to Him—in order to unite him with His will so that He Himself, or His Spirit, may become the subject of the human will.

This is the way in which a new life begins in the human person. Such a life is oriented toward avoiding sins and doing good, or fulfilling the will of Christ; it is a step forward, together with Christ, in the relationship of endless love.

Here Orthodox teaching, the legacy of early Christian teaching, is radically different from Protestant teaching. According to the latter, the original sin is not destroyed, because Christ does not come to dwell in the human person. Rather, Protestant teaching produces a simple declaration that the human person is forgiven of this sin and of all personal sins; that is, it produces his justification, or his external acquittal of the guilt for sins that continue to remain in him, with all the power of egoism implied in them.

But human nature, extensively utilized by God's enemy as an instrument against Him, was left with certain physical weaknesses, which also have repercussions on the soul, and even with certain weaknesses of the soul and of the will. The weakness of little resistance to the temptation of gluttony is linked to the weakness of physical hunger, the weakness of nonresistance to the temptation of laziness is linked to the weakness of tiredness, faintheartedness is linked to the weakness of pain and the fear of death, and pride is linked to the satisfaction of all these weaknesses. The latter are the so-called innocent passions, which easily lead the soul to the former, that is, beyond the limit of their satisfaction to the fall into pleasure and egoistical acts, or

to the pursuit of them.[22] It is against this sliding of the soul toward the exaggerated satisfaction of these passions that the believer must fight after baptism.

The will, which at baptism was detached from the temptation toward this sliding, died to sin with Christ and rose with Him to a new life. But this mortification of sin and toward the new life must continue through the power of Christ's death, and of His life, through progress in holiness; it must continue by also attracting the nature, or its habits, to this mortification and new life. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Rom 12:1).

St. Maximus sees the meaning of the Holy Eucharist in the imposition of the will upon the nature, in the total control of the will that is determined toward good to such a degree that it would renounce even life itself rather than accept the pleasures of and compromises with sin. Thus through the Holy Eucharist one continuously receives power for the nature's liberation from the weaknesses resulting from sin, through the acceptance and strengthening of this mortification or moderation.

In fact, at baptism, through the will that is joined to Christ, He quietly comes to dwell in nature, in which the will is also rooted. For according to the Holy Fathers, the will is the nature's desire to maintain and develop itself, and the true will is rational; that is, it seeks the nature's true interest, or its eternal preservation and development in relationship with God. Therefore, at baptism the will is the nature's first power that receives the spiritual light and strengthening of the Word—the incarnate, sinless, and divine Logos—and His Spirit as the will's co-subject, upon which He had previously acted from the outside. This means that in its most profound level, that of a rational-personal order, the nature was freed from the irrational, contrary, and subpersonal power of sin. However, the weakness of irrational and superficial habits remained in it.

The struggle to weaken these habits is equivalent to the act of fully personalizing and rationalizing the nature, after the first affirmation of the person has been produced at baptism. That is why liberation from the original sin is not effectuated for the descendants of the baptized: because an initial affirmation of the person—an affirmation of the personal choice to overcome the original sin as a subpersonal and

contrapersonal state—is required. The ongoing struggle against the weaknesses of the nature that easily lead it to sin is a further strengthening of the human person's personal character—personal but not individual, because the latter represents humanity's subjugation by the passion of pleasure and by the passion of subpersonal and anticommunitarian arrogance.

But this action of personalization means a more complete imprinting of Christ's hypostasis on the person of the human being. Through this the human subject becomes fully open to other subjects, in the same way that Christ, whose human nature is found in the hypostasis of the Word, is fully open to other human persons not only as God but also as man. Thus through full participation in Christ the human being becomes fully person, that is, a being who is fully communitarian and freed from the prison of egoistic passions. Through the dwelling of Christ—with His human nature purified of sins—in the human person on the basis of his consent, the latter is cleansed of the egoism of the original sin and of other sins, and the action of his communitarian personalization begins. In the same way, the human person's continual union with Christ, who dwells in him, produces an increasingly more complete personalization of human nature, imprinted with the Person of Christ. This makes Christ transparent through human nature, and more precisely through the person bearing this nature.

Everything takes place in the Church because Christ, being the divine hypostasis of His human nature, is thereby open to all human hypostases; as their head and hypostasis—and as the head and hypostasis of the entire human race—Christ facilitates their inclusion in Him, along with the nature they bear. And only because this act takes place in the Church is it an act of personalization, given that the person's aspiration for openness and communion cannot be realized except in the community deeply rooted in Christ, which is the Church.

In accordance with this, St. Mark the Ascetic sees the human person's progress in the new life precisely in the baptized person's frequent personal encounter with Christ, who dwells in him, and thus in ever-increasing communion with Christ.

St. Mark the Ascetic and Diadochos of Photiki say that through baptism Christ first comes to dwell in the depths of our being, without any conscious experience of this fact on our part. This experience begins to take place and afterward grows in increasing faith and good

works, for which we receive power from Christ (who is in the depths of our being) and which we offer to Him: "Because we neither believed strongly in Christ and did not consider ourselves in debt to all of His commandments, nor have we left our selves behind, according to His word, we do not know the mysteries mentioned above, which we have received at the moment of our Baptism. However, when we chastise ourselves for the smallness of our faith and believe in Him sincerely by fulfilling all His commandments, then, having obtained the experience of the things mentioned above, we will confess that Holy Baptism is indeed perfect and, through it, we are given grace, but this remains hidden, awaiting our obedience and the fulfillment of the commandments for which we received the power."[23]

Grace is the very Person of Christ who remains, in our innermost self, available with all His love; however, He waits for us to open ourselves to this love, to begin the dialogue of love and to begin to be filled with its goodness: "This grace is found within us in a hidden way from Baptism, but it is evident only when we, after having trodden the path of commandments well, have offered the sound intentions of our nature to Christ, the High Priest, not to those bitten by beasts . . . The temple is the holy place of the soul and body, [the place] which is built by God . . . But this temple also has a place behind the veil. There Christ has entered for us as a forerunner [Heb 6:20], living in us after Baptism, 'unless indeed [we] are disqualified'" [2 Cor 13:5].[24] Christ has done everything in order to enter into loving dialogue with us. He dwells in the altar of our nature, offering for us the sacrifice of Himself as High Priest to the heavenly Father; He does this in order to discreetly strengthen us, so that we may add the sacrifice of our nature to His sacrifice and may renounce ourselves in order to enter into dialogue with the Father through Him, just as through His sacrifice as man He entered into this dialogue with the Father and with us. We have to respond to His humility with our humility in order to make real the mystery of our encounter with Him.

The place where He dwells as High Priest is the most hidden, purest, and innermost chamber of our heart, which alone can be easily sensitized and open to God. Only the potential human depth can open itself to the infinite divine depth. St. Mark the Ascetic continues, "If that room is not opened through God and through cognizant and rational hope, we are not able to know for sure Him who abides there,

nor are we able to know if the sacrifices of our thoughts have been accepted or not . . . As the believing heart opens through the hope mentioned above, the heavenly High Priest receives the first-born thoughts of the mind and consumes them in the divine fire."[25] Christ as High Priest serves as intercessor not in a place foreign to us, but between the abyss of our heart and the divine abyss; He is in both places as a bridge between them, because He has both of them in Him. As such a High Priest, He wishes to open the abyss of our heart toward the abyss of God, to stimulate our heart's infinite thirst for love so that it may drink from the infinite spring of divine love. He can do this because He is in the abyss of our heart, with the abyss of His human heart open to the divine abyss.

The power of our openness toward God comes from Christ, who came to dwell in us at baptism. From the High Priest who sacrifices Himself over the fire of love for God and for us, we receive the power to add—with a warmth that comes from His warmth—our sacrifice to His sacrifice, our self-renunciation, so that He may take our sacrifice, along with us, to be consumed by the fire of the same love for God. It is evident here that although the power of working comes from Christ, we also have to offer our activity, warmed and strengthened by His activity. "Therefore, O you who have been baptized into Christ, do only the work for which you have received the power, and be ready to receive the appearance of Him who abides in you. And thus will the Lord appear to you spiritually, according to His promise, as He says: 'Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty' [2 Cor 3:17]. Then you will understand what has been said: 'The kingdom of God is within you' [Luke 17:21]."[26] That is to say, the encounter with God in love occurs within us, in the heat of the synergy of love.

The activity that we offer, on the basis of the power we receive, is the fruit of our mystical encounter with Christ. We actualize only what is given to us in an incompletely actualized form. But we accomplish even this actualization with Christ's help. Through this we actualize not only the human potential hidden in Christ but also our potential with Christ's help. In any case, only through this contribution of ours do we experience the fact that we do not produce the result only by ourselves. We must be active in order to know that Christ is also active in us. And we know Christ's activity first in our spirit and then in the new spiritual sensitivities of our body. We know Christ pneumatized

but still present in our body, and therefore as a body that renders our body spiritual and sanctifies it, together with the thoughts of our soul, in all its activities.

The driving force toward pure thoughts and deeds comes from Christ, and once we have conceived the thoughts and performed the deeds, we return them to Christ. We return His gift with our interest. Interpreting the Psalmist's words "Because of Your temple at Jerusalem, kings will bring presents to you" (Ps 68:29), St. Mark the Ascetic says, "Because the mind, which is the king of every person, first takes from the hidden temple of the heart the good and beautiful exhortations of Christ, who abides there, and brings them to the virtuous life that the prophet called Jerusalem; and then it brings them again through the good intention of Christ, who has given them in the first place."[27]

Diadochos of Photiki also says, "Grace at first conceals its presence in those who have been baptized, waiting to see which way the soul inclines; but when the whole man has turned towards the Lord, it then reveals to the heart its presence there with a feeling which words cannot express . . . If, then, a man begins to make progress in keeping the commandments and calls ceaselessly upon the Lord Jesus, the fire of God's grace spreads even to the heart's more outward organs or perception, consciously burning up the tares in the field of the soul."[28]

Human nature is always in motion and always the same nature in its essence. The bipolarity found in the distinction between essence and energy is valid here as well. Human nature is by itself in motion, but it does not cease to be always the same nature in its essence and to be unexhausted in any movement.[29] What comes to human nature from Christ is the power to move the rational will moderately, in accordance with Christ's will—that is, to not move apart from the rational will, in an unfree manner. There is a greater power in the movement in accord with this will. Not only do we praise Christ through such a strengthened and normalized movement, but we also grow, or realize what we ought to be. Through our known thoughts and our manifested actions we become at the same time an image of Christ, who is invisibly found in us, or Christ becomes transparent in us.

Through these thoughts and deeds, by which we make ourselves and Christ masters over our entire being, including our thoughts and deeds—thoughts and deeds conceived of and accomplished through Christ's power—we fulfill our priestly service. Through this service we

offer Christ everything we think and do, as well as ourselves; we die to Christ through the power of His death and live for Him through the power of His Resurrection. Thus we develop our burial and resurrection with Christ, which we experienced at baptism. Only those with a strong faith will enjoy the good things that the righteous will receive through resurrection: "Those who die everyday for the love of Christ . . . rise above every [egoistic] preoccupation of this life and no longer think of anything except this: to attain the love of Christ, which is to open the inner heart, into which Christ entered as forerunner. For we cannot make room within ourselves for the entire working of the Spirit except by fulfilling the perfect commandment, which is that of death" to egoism manifested in sins.[30]

This saying is not only about the old man's death to sin but also about our death as subjects in general so that Christ may live in us as a subject (Gal 2:20). I am myself in Christ. He became the inner subject of my subject without ceasing to be in Himself as subject; I see myself fulfilled in Him and am full of joy at this fulfillment. He became a subject for me while remaining at the same time a "Thou," the most responsible "Thou" for me.

My inclusion as a subject in Christ's subject, which is an act of the supreme love, is at the same time the act of the most complete opening of the heart, of my innermost self, and through this act I raise my life from dissipation when I collect myself from self-forgetfulness. The heart is meant to be open toward God as Person and toward human beings, just like a window is made to be open toward visible things. This opening of the heart for myself and for Christ began at baptism; it did away with the attachment to the sin of egoism, in which I thought that my self was affirmed. Because my dialogical subject is included in Christ's subject, my heart opens up in Christ's human heart, which is open to God's infinity to the maximum degree.

Diadochos of Photiki says of the person who has attained an intense love: "I know a man who loves God with great intensity, and yet grieves because he does not love Him as much as he would wish. His soul is ceaselessly filled with burning desire that God should be glorified in him and that he himself should be as nothing."[31] In this we see both the subject's inclusion in Christ and his distinction from Him. There is a self-forgetfulness even in his grief that he cannot love Jesus as much as he would like. "He who loves God

consciously in his heart is known by God . . . still dwelling in the body, he yet departs from it . . . because he has once and for all transcended self-love in his love for God."[32] In such a person "the Spirit will speak" (Matt 10:20), "the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'" (Rom 8:15), for he has "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16). Christ or Christ's Spirit has become the subject of the human person's sentiments, prayers, words, and deeds. But this also works in the opposite way: the human being is the subject of the sentiments of Christ's body. It is a union without confusion. He who does not completely fulfill all Christ's commandments but only some and only in part has not completely died with Christ and is not united with Him because he does not love Him completely; however, he can enter the Kingdom, that is, he can taste the good things that come from a partial communion with Him, according to the degree of his union with Him. "And those who have partially fulfilled the commandments, that is how they will enter the Kingdom. But those who want to reach perfection should fulfill the commandments entirely. It is the renunciation of one's own soul, which is death, that comprises all the commandments."[33]

Therefore death also signifies complete love for Christ. But love is the virtue that crowns all other virtues and comprises all. Virtues are the habits that our nature has acquired through constantly fulfilling the commandments with the help of Christ, or of the Spirit found in our heart since baptism. The commandments are but an invitation to open our heart completely to Christ and to our neighbors; we also effectuate this opening of our heart from the power of Christ, who through His commandments offers us Himself, as well as His power and His appeal that our effort be of one accord with Him in love. The burning love for God that crowns all other virtues is the fruit of Christ's Spirit found within the heart, but it is also a response of the human person. It is a complete encounter in our heart with Christ, who is full of the divine infinity. It is a complete revelation of Christ found within the heart. Diadochos of Photiki says, "When the ascetic has finally acquired all the virtues—and in particular the total shedding of possessions—then grace illumines his whole being with a deeper awareness, warming him with great love of God."[34]

St. Mark the Ascetic says, "If any of the faithful, having fulfilled all commandments, finds within himself a spiritual operation that

measures up to his way of living, let him believe that he has received beforehand the power for it, because he has received through Baptism the grace of the Spirit, the cause of all virtues, that is, not only of the spiritually hidden virtues, but also of those manifested; let none of the virtuous imagine that he has done any good by his own power. For a good man, the Word says, 'out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good' [Luke 6:45], but not on his own; I understand the good treasure to be the Holy Spirit hidden in the heart."[35]

We have seen that St. Mark the Ascetic believes that even those who have only partially fulfilled the commandments, and who therefore have not acquired the fullness of virtue, can enter the heavenly Kingdom. St. Symeon the New Theologian seems to be stricter. He says that virtues are like golden or silver leaves that, being soldered together by the Holy Spirit, make up a vessel into which the grace of the Holy Spirit is poured. If a leaf is missing, the entire grace flows out through the opening produced in the vessel.[36]

These two opinions can be reconciled in the sense that each human person must cultivate all the virtues, because the total lack of one (for example, humility, patience, or meekness) alters all the others; but given the potential for endless progress in goodness, no human person can ever reach the end point of the virtues. He must always make the effort to ascend higher. All virtues are connected to a certain degree of love, which on one hand comes from the Spirit of love, who came to dwell in the heart; on the other hand progress in goodness is the human person's response to that love. Whereas according to Mark the Ascetic the virtue of love is the conclusion of the human person's progress in the virtues through the help of the grace hidden in the heart, and Mark the Ascetic therefore understands love as the ultimate level of virtue, one that few can attain, Diadochos of Photiki, writing more explicitly, says that love for God stimulates man's ascent and sustains all virtues. Along this line, St. Symeon says that the human person must have all the virtues, an affirmation that St. Mark the Ascetic does not contradict. As Diadochos of Photiki says, "From the instant we are baptized, grace is hidden in the depths of the intellect, concealing its presence even from the perception of the intellect itself. When someone begins, however, to love God with full resolve, then in a mysterious way, by means of intellectual perception, grace communicates something of its riches to the soul . . . For as the soul advances

[in renouncing worldly pleasures], divine grace more and more reveals itself to the intellect."[37]

St. Mark the Ascetic asks us to offer our thoughts as sacrifices to Christ from the first instance of their appearance, as long as they are not mingled with something evil, as long as they are not "bitten by beasts," as he puts it. Only in this way can we maintain our thoughts pure; only in this way can we fully unite ourselves with Christ.

This is the importance of the human person's priestly service. Only in this way can we offer ourselves in purity to Christ: if from the outset we offer all our thoughts about things to Christ, so that the High Priest Himself may offer them to the Father, sanctifying us. Only in this way will things not become objects of our greed and of certain tendencies toward pleasure that emerge from within us.

In this is manifested, however, not only the true love for God, which sees Him in everything, but also the true love for things and for persons, which does not lower them to the level of simple objects of pleasure and egoistic interests but places them in their wonderful and deep mystery and hidden meaning in the Word of God's eternal reasons. Only in this way are persons regarded as free partners in a love that is filled with the mutual respect and the equal need of one for the other, whereas things are regarded as a means for the manifestation of mutual love.

Impassioned thought about things, as well as unfriendly and impassioned thought about other persons, casts a fog over them. It gives them too much importance for a single moment, an importance that in a short while is transformed into contempt—or they are despised from the first moment. Passionless thought, however, places them in the horizon of God's infinite light and within the context of their purpose, which is to materialize His infinite and always varied wisdom and love for us. That is why the Holy Fathers ask us to view things in their simple meanings—those which are pure and detached from passion—by offering these meanings to God and placing them in relationship with Him; thus we fulfill our service as priests of creation before God. St. Maximus the Confessor says, "An impassioned conceptual image [or meaning] is a thought compounded of passion and a conceptual image [or meaning]. If we separate the passion from the conceptual image, what remains is the passion-free thought. We can make this separation by means of spiritual love and self-control, if only we have the

will."[38] The simple meaning is not only the pure meaning but also the transparent meaning of things, deepened in the infinite divine light and love. The virtues separate the meanings of things from the impassioned meanings that darken them and behave as such toward them. That is why the virtues also represent a vision of God's transparence through persons and things. This is possible because through virtues one no longer sees things in their simply opaque material thickness, because through them the mind is separated from the passions that are awakened or produced by this thickness, which stirs only the body: "The virtues separate the intellect from the passions."[39] To the pure person everything is pure. To the pure person everything is transparent, and he himself is transparent to God. The pure person sees God through everything. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt 5:8). Thus through the purification from passions and by obtaining the virtues, the human person rises to the knowledge of God's reasons by contemplating things in God, and hence he rises to the knowledge of God Himself. The knowledge of God does not have a purely theoretical basis but a practical one. It requires an effort of cleansing from passions and of obtaining purity through the virtues; it requires pure love toward all things, so that it may see God through all things. In the pure man the entire cosmos regains its radiance in God, a radiance that spreads from God through him.

Thus the heart of man opens up to God through love, which is not only the peak of the virtues but also of the knowledge of God, as love is the prerogative of a mind freed from passions. In fact, by purifying the body and the soul from passions and filling them with love for God, the virtues at the same time purify the intellect from the impassioned thoughts—which distort things and persons and close them in a narrow horizon—and raise the intellect to the knowledge of God through the wide and radiant horizon in which they see both things and persons. "The intellect, once totally free from passions, proceeds undistracted to the contemplation of created beings, making its way towards knowledge of the Holy Trinity."[40]

This pure knowledge of the simple meanings of created beings—simple but nevertheless infinitely deep—is the fruit of a love that is superior to their love, the latter of which comes out of a transitory, material interest. Even the love for a woman that surpasses sensuality is a superior love because it is enduring: the woman is loved and respected

in her eternal mystery and in her broad, spiritual dimensions, which are known through this pure love in God. In this sense, for those advanced in Christ there is neither male (for the woman) nor female (for the man), but all are one in Christ (Gal 3:28), because the man and the woman meet in their spirit, which is identical in its depth and purity.

This does not mean that Christians are not allowed either to partake of things or to be united through a marriage between a man and a woman. Things can be utilized not for pleasure but to sustain life in the body and to know and praise God. The love between a man and a woman must always take the form of marriage. Only in this way does the woman actualize herself for the man in the plenitude of her being, and likewise the man for the woman; thus a true unity is accomplished between them. Through marriage the love of a man for a woman surpasses transitory, narrow, and egoistic sensuality, and likewise the love of a woman for a man. Only in this way do they help each other in their spiritual ascent toward God, in their true fulfillment. St. Maximus the Confessor says, "Scripture does not forbid anything which God has given us for our use; but it condemns immoderation and thoughtless behavior. For instance, it does not forbid us to eat, or to beget children, or to possess material things and to administer them properly. But it does forbid us to be gluttonous, to fornicate and so on. It does not forbid us to think of these things—they were made to be thought of—but it forbids us to think of them with passion."[41]

There is, however, another way that eases the ascent toward God. It is the way of a more radical opening than those mentioned, out of a greater love for God:

> Some of the things which we do for the sake of God are done in obedience to the commandments; others are done not in obedience to the commandments but, so to speak, as a voluntary offering. For example, we are required by the commandments to love God and our neighbor, to love our enemies, not to commit adultery or murder and so on. And when we transgress these commandments, we are condemned. But we are not commanded to live as virgins, to abstain from marriage, to renounce possessions, to withdraw into solitude and so forth. These are of the nature of gifts, so that if through weakness we are unable to fulfill some of the commandments, we may by these free gifts propitiate our blessed Master.[42]

The motivation that St. Maximus gives in these so-called "evangelical exhortations" is different from the Catholic one. By fulfilling these exhortations one does not gain certain superfluous merits, but certain gaps in the process of keeping the commandments are thereby filled. Oftentimes certain Christians, aware that they are not able to fulfill the general requirements expected of them, take it upon themselves to fulfill other things in order to obtain God's mercy for those things that they know they are unable to fulfill. For their conscience the fulfillment of these exhortations, which they feel they can fulfill more easily than those of a general Christian nature, becomes an obligation. Monasticism was such a question of calling. And he who discovers this calling must take it seriously and should not pride himself on following it, considering that he does more than he is required to do and more than others.

In fact, the ascent into perfection is endless. It cannot be said of anyone that he has surpassed this perfection, so that what he does beyond this level is no longer assimilated into his person but is a surplus that he can offer to the Church so that she may put it at the disposal of those who did not fulfill what was required of them. There is no selfishness in those who climb to the very high levels of perfection. The benefit that others gain from them is due to the direct outpouring of power from these persons on the higher levels to those on the lower levels, with no need of an official intermediary that will administer this surplus itself, in order to distribute it to others as merits detached from the persons who gained them. In fact, all Christians can gain from one another, because each one has something to communicate to and to receive from others.

C. The Gift of Salvation Appropriated through Faith and Good Works

From what has been said so far about the phases of the new life in Christ, one can see the importance of good works in the personal appropriation of salvation. We will dwell a little more on this, given the fact that good works are contested in Protestantism and are understood in a distinct way in Catholicism.

Protestants contest the necessity of good works for salvation based on a few places in the Holy Apostle Paul's Epistles that deal with salva-

tion through faith, without the works of the law (Rom 3:20, 28, 30; 2:4, 6; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:8). This is in accordance with their teaching that justification is the believers' juridical acquittal of the guilt for sins, without the nullification of sins and without a new life in Christ being planted in them.

We have seen, however, that the Holy Apostle Paul understands the "righteousness" of which the human person partakes in Christ as a new life, which is manifested in good works that can lead him to the spiritual stature of Jesus Christ, the perfect man. All the parts of St. Paul's Epistles that deal with the new life in Christ, and the continuous growth in this new life, imply an appreciation of good works. In fact, St. Paul speaks in many other places about the necessity of good works.

It is clear that the good works whose importance Protestantism contests are those works that the human person believes will make him righteous without union with the sacrificed and risen Christ. Given this mentality, the Holy Apostle Paul lays faith in Christ as the foundation of salvation—not faith in the juridical importance of Christ's death as restitution for our sins but faith as personal relationship with Christ through which Christ's power shines forth in the human person. This faith is a faith that is equal to gradual union with Christ, from whose sacrifice and Resurrection we also receive the power to die to sins—that is, to die to our egoism and isolation—and to rise to a new life in intimate communion with Christ, a life that will lead us too toward resurrection from the power of His Resurrection. It is not works outside Christ that save us, and thus not our works done on the basis of an impersonal normative law. But the works stemming from the power of Christ, who came to dwell in us, are necessary for appropriating our personal salvation, because they increase in us our union with Christ and our likeness with Him. In these works it is shown that we did appropriate salvation in Christ. Pride for our works is avoided not only in Protestantism but also in Orthodoxy. Whereas in Protestantism one renounces any kind of works—and thus even works that come from the power of communion with Christ, because there is no faith in such communion—in Orthodoxy these works are regarded as the fruition of Christ's presence and power.

There is an organic link between these works and faith in Christ: communion with Christ is manifested in both of them. In works communion with Christ is manifested as a development of the commu-

nion that begins through faith. Faith in Christ is faith in the Christ who is in us, faith from the power of Him who is found in us; it is the presence and power of Christ, who came to dwell invisibly in us, that shines forth in us. This faith includes the love for Him who sacrificed Himself, rose again for us, and came to dwell in us so that through His state of sacrifice and resurrection we may receive power to die to sin and to lead a new life from Him and with Him. Christ Himself fills us with love for Him through His love for us. And love gives us the power to become like Him: to die to sin, to act with love toward everyone and everything. Christianity is the great mystery of personal communion that the Western churches did not comprehend. It is the great mystery of a person's growth through the life of another person and, in the final analysis, through the Person of Christ, full of divine infinity.

Thus the faith of which the Holy Apostle Paul speaks is the faith by which we appropriate Christ's state of righteousness that resulted from His sacrifice and Resurrection. Just as this state is dynamic in Him, so too is it in us; it is "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6). It is opposed to works linked to the law of circumcision or noncircumcision; it is opposed to the works of any law, which are works done through the human person's power, which is always weak when it is not sustained by communion with the Person of Christ, who is infinite in His power and love.

Love is the greatest force. But it is strong only when it is sustained by communion with the Person of Christ, infinite in power and love, the Person who is one with the true faith. Love will continue even after faith comes to an end, that is, when Christ openly reveals Himself to us. And because love is great, it is also working; that is, it shows its greatness in its capacity to prove itself in all its manifestations. Therefore he who has faith but does not have love, even if he can move mountains, or even if he were to give up his body to be burned, is nothing because he is not in communion. So how does love work? "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor 13:4–7).

Faith without love has a grim countenance because it is an individual effort, not communion; it can be arrogant, and it can hide in-

dividualism within itself. Love is the opposite of rigid individualism: it is humble. The Western concept of faith is explained through the doctrine of a distant Christ who is not present in the heart. Love is the heart's unlimited openness toward others in Christ; it is self-forgetfulness for the sake of others after the example and from the power of Christ. To live in love means to live in the generous limitlessness reflected in us from the infinity of the Person of God and also found in other persons. One can only love another person. The person's potential and thirst for infinity shows that in the communion between persons, the infinity of God's infinite Person is manifested.

Faith in Christ is love for Christ, as well as the appropriation of Christ's love for human beings. Otherwise faith is not real. For true faith is itself the beginning of this openness to and trust in the infinity of Christ's love. Luther contested the importance of love because it would be of the human being and thus he would pride himself on it. The human person, he said, does not have to offer anything in order to keep his faith, because he is saved only through Christ. But he who loves truly is not proud, because he forgets himself. He who loves Christ and who loves others in Christ is not arrogant, because he knows that his love is nourished by Christ's love for us; he knows that in the infinity of love by which he feels overwhelmed lives the infinity of Christ's love. Our love is only our response to Christ's love, given from the power of His love. It is the wave of our being—moving toward Him and stirred by the wave of His love—that attracts us toward Him. If His love did not exist to permeate us and to attract us toward Him, we would behave callously. We could not even believe. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine . . . ?" (Rom 8:35–36). Nor shall spectacular doctrines, like those of the Protestant theological schools, separate us from this love. For St. Mark the Ascetic says, "He who neglects action and depends on theoretical knowledge holds a staff of reed instead of a double-edged sword; and when he confronts his enemies in time of war, 'it will go into his hand, and pierce it' (2 Kgs. 18:21), injecting its natural poison."[43] He also says, "Understand the words of Holy Scripture by putting them into practice, and do not fill yourself with conceit by expatiating on theoretical ideas."[44]

The Holy Apostle Paul indeed rejects works, but only those that do not stem from faith in Christ and love for Him. Therefore faith is the

foundation of works. But just as the works that do not stem from faith in Christ have no value for salvation, so too the faith that is not active through love is not a true faith. That is why works in themselves are not considered as salvific, particularly those that have merely an external appearance and as such do not constitute the human person's right to salvation. Consequently works cannot be a payment that could surpass the restitution paid for salvation itself, a payment that could be detached from the person who made it and deposited in a treasury of superfluous merits out of which others' shortcomings could be made up for. There can be works performed in an external manner, and still the soul remains without love, rigid in its pride because of the works done. There can be works performed out of different interests, with various plans. Works receive a salvific value only when hearts overflow into them out of faith as an unmediated relationship with Christ; they are salvific only when there is an increase in the human person's faith and love, which continuously better him, and only when they transfer the goodness of the person who performs them to the being of those who enjoy their benefits. Otherwise, if the intended recipient of certain good works detects a pride in the one who performs these works for his own benefit, this action could change the recipient for the worse.

The Western conception that we obtain salvation on our own account in a juridical way renders our works useless (Protestantism), or considers them as a supplement to the juridical restitution that Christ paid for our sins (Catholicism). In either case the heart does not soften and does not open up for Christ from Christ and for other persons from Christ. This is our salvation that Christ seeks by the fact that He became man: to communicate His love to us so that we may become the bearers of His love, to remove us from the rigidity of sinful egoism. Neither Protestantism nor Catholicism sees the salvation that Christ brought as a foundation for the human person's real restoration in communion with God. Only works springing from love, whose source in us is Christ's love, have meaning for our salvation.

The love that is the source of these works, which in turn enlarge this love, can never reach a level at which it can no longer grow because there is no limit to Christ's love, by which it is nourished, and because our person, whom Christ wants to enlarge in love, never reaches the end of its growth. To consider certain works as worthy of salvation even though they are credited to a person from without and do not spring

from his love—as is the case in Catholicism, in which works from the surplus of others' good works are attributed, by the authority of the Church, to certain persons—implies that works are placed above the person. It implies an ignorance of the organic relationship between works and persons, for works are not regarded as the manifestation and growth of a heart open toward God and neighbors. Persons grow only through the love manifested in their own works, and love is manifested in the communion of the person who performs certain works with the person for whom he performs them. Works are the manifestations of the direct, loving relationship between two persons. Properly speaking, only in the relationship with God as supreme Person is the human person's salvation truly achieved, because only from the love of God manifested in works—love toward which the human person opens himself through faith and his own works—can he be truly filled with a lasting love manifested in endless works.

Love is the source and the criterion of works for Diadochos of Photiki as well. Love is found within the bosom of true faith or vice versa. And good works are comprised in both of them. In love the faith's character of creating communion is made apparent—that is, in love manifested through works. In love and in works we see once again that the human person's salvation is achieved in the Church. In the Church our personal restoration and growth, as well as its repercussions upon the world, also takes place. For our personal growth is a common growth with others in God, and this growth is manifested in works of love shown through things.

Diadochos of Photiki says, "Faith without works and works without faith will both alike be condemned,[45] for he who has faith must offer to the Lord the faith which shows itself in actions. Our Father Abraham would not have been counted righteous because of his faith had he not offered its fruit, his son (cf. Jas. 2:21; Rom. 4:3).[46] He who loves God both believes truly and performs the works of faith reverently. But he who only believes and does not love, lacks even the faith he thinks he has; for he believes merely with a certain superficiality of intellect and is not energized by the full force of love's glory. The chief part of virtue, then, is faith energized by love."[47] And this love in turn springs from God, who is in us. "Thus, when we fervently remember God, we feel divine longing well up within us from the depths of our heart."[48] To the degree that they increase, the virtues—

in which we see the love of God that is nourished by God's love and made strong for the love of God—lead us toward "unbreakable communion" with God.[49]

Consequently, we have a paradox: on one hand love and the good works springing from it are a gift; on the other hand it is our duty to perform them. St. Mark the Ascetic says, "Wishing to show that to fulfil every commandment is a duty, whereas sonship is a gift given to men through His own Blood, the Lord said: 'When you have done all that is commanded you, say: "We are useless servants: we have only done what was our duty"' (Luke 17:10). Thus the kingdom of heaven is not a reward for works, but a gift of grace prepared by the Master for his faithful servants."[50]

On one hand love is a gift, and on the other hand we have to receive it and actively appropriate it through works. We cannot remain passive or unfeeling toward it. We cannot be saved without our active response to God's love for us; we are like "logs," as Luther put it. God does not despise us so much that He would move us like insensible objects into the heavenly Kingdom. If He did despise us so much, He would not have become man for us. And then would not this insensibility be extended into insensibility in the happiness of eternal life? For how would God suddenly produce a sensibility in us if no effort to acquire it has yet begun to be produced in us?

St. Symeon the New Theologian says,

> Run, seek, knock, that the door of the kingdom of heaven may be opened to you (cf. Matt 7:7; Luke 11:9) and you may enter within it and have it within you (cf. Luke 17:21). As for those who depart from this present life without attaining to it, how will they ever find it once they have gone there? Accordingly, it is here that we have been commanded to ask, to seek, and to knock . . . If then we refuse to do this and to obey Christ our Master, so that we may endeavor to receive the kingdom within us while we are still in this life, will we not deserve to hear Him speak to us when we have departed thither and say, "Why are you now seeking the kingdom which you refused when I was giving it to you?"[51]

The Savior Himself has said that love for Him is manifested and strengthened by fulfilling His commandments, and this leads us to a more complete communion with Him. "He who has My command-

ments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him . . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home with Him" (John 14:21, 23).

Through the works that spring from love, which in turn grows through Christ's love as man for His Father and through His love for us, our nature advances from its quality as image up the unending steps of likeness with God; it advances together and in like manner with Christ as man, who for this purpose took our nature upon Himself, and through this He laid the foundation for our salvation.

Time itself is given to us with this growth in mind. In his writing the *Ambigua*, St. Maximus the Confessor defended this sense of time at length in opposition to Origen, who considered our life in time to be a result of the fall of souls from an incorporeal existence. We grow in time by advancing in our approach toward God, through works performed out of love for God, as a response to His love and from the power of His love. We cannot respond from the beginning in a limitless way to God's limitless love, because through creation we are limited by essence, unable to receive through grace God's entire power of love all at once. But at the same time, as images of God, we aspire to infinitude and are capable of it, not by actualizing in an exclusive way what we have within ourselves but by strengthening what we have in ourselves through our participation in the infinite God. However, we cannot attain to full participation without preparation; such preparation is a gradual participation through which we become aware that without complete participation in God through His grace our continual transcendence still moves within a limited framework—that is, we remain forever closed in time, or subject to death.

Taking into consideration our gradual growth toward the limitless response to His limitless love, God Himself does not show this love in its entirety from the beginning, but He shares it with us in stages; He Himself descends to our temporal level and walks with us on the path toward the limitless manifestation of His love and toward our limitless response to it, that is, toward our ascent into His eternity, which is not produced through this gradual growth but through an act of God whereby we are moved into this eternity. As long as we cannot respond in an unlimited way to God's unlimited love, we have a future, and we

pass each moment of life in hopes of growing more and giving more of ourselves in the future. Compared to what we give now, our past gifts always seem insufficient and behind us. But at the same time we feel that even now we are unable to offer ourselves as we would like. This is how time is constituted: the past is behind us, we feel that the present is insufficient, and we tend toward the future through the hope that comes from a continual need to go beyond our limitations and from the possibility that we might do so. On a basic level we search for eternity; we thirst for it and eternity itself attracts us, but we are always conscious that we do not have it except from the full gift of God.

From this comes the need for continual works as ever-increasing responses to God's love, as expressions of our need to respond more fully to God's unlimited love, which in a certain way we feel in the constant insufficiency of our response; it is our constant need to respond more fully to the appeals of others. We feel that such appeals are unlimited in their potential, because others always remain unsatisfied with our limited responses and feel that we should be able to respond to them in an unlimited way, not from within ourselves but from the gift of God's unlimited love that will one day be given to us. Especially when we give a new response, we feel that it was not complete because a new potential for a more complete response has appeared in us. But even in the moment in which we give this response, we feel that it is incomplete, behind us, and belonging to the past, because at the very same moment there appears in us the potential for a new response, which we hope will be perfect, or more perfect. It is a new potential of which our nature itself became capable on the basis of its potential to be in unlimited dialogue with the infinite God; it is a potentiality that is actualized gradually only in this efficacious dialogue. This is the "*epektasis*," or "forward tension," of which St. Gregory of Nyssa speaks—following the example of the Holy Apostle Paul—as tensions progressing toward a goal, which is none other than God Himself with the manifest infinity of His love: "toward the goal for the crown of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:14).

About this race from a less complete status to a more complete one, St. Mark the Ascetic also says, "However great our virtuous actions of today, they do not requite but condemn our past negligence."[52] And again: "The more you increase virtue today, the more you prove that you are in debt for yesterday, making evident the power of nature."[53]

That is, you made evident the unlimited potentiality of nature but also God's unlimited readiness to strengthen and actualize it more and more. In this another fact may also be made evident: that although it may seem that what we have done in the past was done with maximum effort, our action lacked the full effort of which we were capable.

The necessity of unceasing works also comes from the need to respond to others and to different situations, to our neighbors' other needs that God confronts us with, asking us to continually manifest our love, which in another way is God's unlimited love for human persons through us and for us as well. For He wants us to grow unceasingly and in multiple ways, to develop all our potential for knowledge and action, to develop the communion of love with as many people as possible, and to continually renew it. Thus we realize our creation from more and more different points of view; that is, we actualize, deepen, and bring to light in a greater degree other attributes of Christ's image imprinted in us, causing Him to appear ever more brightly in the richness of His attributes and in His loving interest in all human persons.

Christ's human image is made up of the harmony of innumerable virtues, of innumerable aspects of the good; it is a harmony that reflects God's attributes in a human manner. He who through continual works of various kinds imprints in himself various virtues also imprints through this the very features of Christ's image; that is, in his person he gives human form to the attributes of God, in a way similar to Christ.[54] This is a true participation in God and a reflection of God through our personal being. The human person takes the divine image in him to the level of likeness and to deifying love.[55] The light of Christ's face has thus become visibly transparent in his face.

As Christ worked continually, manifesting His love again and again when faced with the needs of the human persons around Him, so we too must do the same works. But the works required of us do not only consist of displays of our love toward human persons; they also consist of acts of bridling our egoism, which limits us in general, not allowing us the possibility of partaking of Christ's unlimited love nor of responding to this love. These required works also consist of works that strengthen our purity or transparency as well as our relationship with God, that intensify our approach to Him and our loving relationship with Him.

The Holy Apostle Paul spoke of a continual "forward tension," a call to "press toward the goal," but also of the fact that this temporal tension does not by itself take us to the perfection of eternal life. "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward (ἐπεκτεινόμενος) the goal for the crown of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13–14). The goal of the race is above, beyond our temporal plane. But we hear an "upward call," which means that we feel in our being a tendency toward that goal. It is a "crown" for our efforts performed here. If there were no such effort, we could expect no crown either. Above, the temporal race is finished. There is an unlimited response to God's unlimited love, a response that no longer needs to be surpassed; there is eternal rest. But the race in time is necessary in order to obtain the crown of this rest in endless joy. Here the human person becomes worthy of the crown of that rest by running the race, by making use of time.

Protestant dialectical theology deprives time of any value. Ignoring works, it disesteems the person's potential for growth, or his value in the eyes of God as the focal point of the effort toward His ever-greater love; it disesteems the importance of his active response to God's love. God's love, in the Protestant conception, hits an insurmountable obstacle. Holy Scripture and the Holy Fathers, by emphasizing the importance of the manifestation of personal love and thus of time, teach us that only here on earth can one gain the eternal Kingdom. Earlier we presented a significant quotation from St. Symeon the New Theologian about this point.

Theosophy and anthroposophy indulge in a passivism similar to that of Protestantism; they do not give enough importance to the human person's current existence, considering that there will be other lives in which the human person will do more, somehow constrained by the higher steps on which he will be found. They disesteem the human person even more by going as far as to nullify the person through a series of reincarnations, a series that ends in the blending of all persons into the impersonal essence. What importance could works have in such a conception? If they are still accomplished, this happens on the basis of a natural necessity, in the same way that natural phenomena are produced.

Abbreviations

ANF Ante-Nicene Fathers, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, 10 vols., New York, 1885–87

ET English translation

NPNF[1] Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, ed. Philip Schaff, 14 vols., New York, 1886–89

NPNF[2] Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, 14 vols., New York, 1890–99

PG Patrologia Graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne, 161 vols., Paris, 1857–86

SC Sources chrétiennes, Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1943–

NOTES

Chapter 1
The Descent of the Holy Spirit and the Beginning of the Church

1. John Karmiris hesitates in regard to the act by which the Church is established: in one place he declares, in the spirit of Catholic theology, that the Church was established judicially on the cross (according to Catholic theology, everything was accomplished on the cross in order to satisfy the divine honor and thus to realize the reconciliation between God and humans), and in another place he declares, in the spirit of the Holy Fathers, that the establishment of the Church must be found not in one single act but in the Incarnation, in the instructions for the organization of the Church, in the Last Supper, and in the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension (*Η ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία* [Athens, 1973], 98n3 and the entire exposition from pages 74–102). And again, in some places he sees the importance of the Holy Spirit in the vivification (ζωοποίησις) of the Church, which preexisted in a motionless way, and in other places in the actual establishment of the Church; he says, "Through the descent and operation of the Holy Spirit, the establishment of the Church has also been produced" (ibid., 96). For the first opinion he follows the example of the Catholic theologian Meschler, who sees the Holy Spirit's role in setting in motion the organism of the Church, constituted in a preexistent way (*Die Gabe des heiligen Pfingstfestes* [Freiburg, 1930], 103, in Karmiris, *Η ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 99).

But what can a motionless or lifeless Church be? Karmiris' affirmation implies the correct idea about the Holy Spirit's life-giving role, but this must be combined with the idea that through the Holy Spirit's descent the Church herself takes on real being, bringing to completion everything that was done before in preparation for the laying of her foundation by Christ. St. John

Chrysostom says, "In order for the Spirit to come, the Lamb had to be slain, sin had to disappear, and the tomb and the Resurrection had to occur" (St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 1 on Holy Pentecost*, § 4, PG 50:658–59).

2. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:454).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 458.

5. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogue 3 on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity* (PG 75:853D).

6. Idem, *Dialogue 7 on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity* (PG 75:1093).

7. Ibid., 1116.

8. St. Gregory Palamas, *Oration 24: On Pentecost* (PG 151:308C).

9. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 1 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:456).

10. St. Gregory Palamas, *On Pentecost* (PG 151:312C).

11. PG 78:757A.

12. Paul Evdokimov, *L'Esprit Saint dans la tradition orthodoxe* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1969), 90.

13. Ibid., 91.

14. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 1 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:450). See also St. Irenaeus: "Ubi enim Ecclesia, ibi et Spiritus Dei, et ubi Spiritus Dei illic Ecclesia et omnis gratia" (*Against Heresies* 3.24.1, PG 7:966) [that is, "For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace" (ANF 1:458) – trans.].

15. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:467).

16. St. John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3.6 (PG 94:1008).

17. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:467).

18. Ibid., 468.

19. Ibid., 467.

Chapter 2
The Theandric Constitution of the Church

1. Karmiris uses the term "the theandric nature of the Church" (*Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 103). We hesitated to use the term "theandric nature" so as not to give the impression that in the Church the Godhead and humanity were united in one nature in a monophysite sense.

2. Ibid., 10. Georges Florovsky: "In this sense one can say that the Church is Christ" ("Die Kirche: ihr Wesen und ihre Aufgabe," in *Die Kirche im Gottes Heilsplan*, ed. World Council of Churches [Zurich, 1948], 53). A. Nygren: "The body of Christ is Christ Himself. The Church is Christ, as after His Resurrection He is with us today and meets us on earth" ("Corpus Christi," in *En bok om Kyrkan* [Lund, Sweden: SKB, 1943], 20, in Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 10n2).

3. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 129.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., 133–34.

6. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Gospel of John* 16.6–7 (PG 74:422).

7. St. John Chrysostom, *Discourse Before Going into Exile* 2 (PG 52:429).

8. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 137.

9. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilies 8 and 24 on First Corinthians* (PG 61:72).

10. St. John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3.6 (PG 94:1009).

11. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:303).

12. St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "Christ, being light by nature, does not need light, but He implants His own light in us who are created and outside the Godhead" (*Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 9, PG 68:644D).

13. Idem, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:141A–B).

14. Ibid., 325A.

15. Idem, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 10 (PG 68:712).

16. Idem, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:296A).

17. Ibid., 225.

18. Ibid., 545D.

19. Ibid., 549–52.

20. Ibid., 553.

21. Ibid., 552A.

22. Ibid., 553C.

23. Idem, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 11 (PG 68:736).

24. Ibid., 748.

25. "Those who are sanctified are filled with light, esteemed and placed like precious stones next to Christ's heart and mind" (ibid., 740).

26. Ibid., bk. 10; col. 672.

27. Ibid., bk. 17, col. 1124.

28. Idem, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:239A).

29. Idem, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 10 (PG 68:661B).

30. St. John Chrysostom says that whereas Christ had only one Resurrection—that of the body—because He died only with the body, not with the soul, we, Adam's descendants, have to rise twice: once with the soul at baptism, and then with the body at the beginning of the age to come, for we were both dead with the soul and mortal with the body. "Adam died both through sin and through nature [essence]. In Christ there is only one death, because He did not sin. But even this unique death is for us . . . that is why He only rose once from the dead. Because we die a double death, we also rejoice in a double resurrection. Our first resurrection is from sin, for we were buried with Him in baptism, and we rose with Him in baptism. This first resurrection is the cleansing of sins. The second resurrection is that of the body. He gave you the greater one; wait for the lesser one too" (*On the Resurrection*, PG 50:438–40).

31. Beginning from the Holy Apostle Paul's words "even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor 4:16), St. John Chrysostom says, "The body grows weaker, but the soul grows stronger and more vigorous, almost as if it receives wings"

[cf. *Homily 9 on 2 Corinthians*: "For in proportion as the body suffers ten thousand things, in the like proportion hath the soul goodlier hopes and becometh brighter, like gold refined in the fire more and more" (NPNF[1] 12:322) – trans.].

32. [Unidentified.]

33. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:233).

34. Ibid., 413–16.

Chapter 3
Christ's Threefold Ministry and the Priesthood of the Church

1. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:457).

2. Ibid., 425B.

3. "We are ourselves united with the Father when the sweet fragrance of Christ the Bridegroom rises from within us" (idem, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 10, PG 68:664).

4. Ibid., 761.

5. Ibid., bk. 17, col. 1089.

6. Ibid., bk. 15, col. 957B.

7. Paul Evdokimov, "Holiness in the Tradition of the Orthodox Church," in *In the World, of the Church: A Paul Evdokimov Reader*, ed. and trans. Michael Plekon and Alexis Vinogradov (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001), 99–100.

8. Clement of Rome, *First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* 42.1 (ANF 1:16). See also sections 42.2–4 and 44.2ff. of the epistle.

9. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Ephesians* 3.2.

10. Idem, *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* 8.1.

11. *First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* 42, 44 (ANF 1:16, 17).

12. Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 1, in Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 400.

13. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 466. See also this quote from Georges Florovsky: "The charismatic unity of the Church is ensured by the apostolic succession . . . which is a charismatic organ that ensures the identity and the unity of the living body . . . It is *through* its bishop, or more precisely, *in* its bishop, that each local or particular church is included in the totality of the catholic [complete] Church. Through her bishop she is united to the primary sources of the charismatic life of the Church, [and] linked to Pentecost" ("Le Corps du Christ vivant. Une interprétation orthodoxe de l'Eglise," in *La Sainte Eglise Universelle. Confrontation oecuménique*, Cahiers théologiques de l'actualité protestante, Hors série 4 [Neuchâtel: Dalachaux et Niestlé], 9–57, at 33, 37).

14. Translation taken from *The Liturgikon*, trans. Leonidas Contos, ed. Spencer T. Kezios (Northridge, CA: Narthex Press, 1996), 91.

15. Ibid., 90.

16. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Second Timothy*, § 3 (PG 62:610).

17. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 2* (PG 35:481A).

18. St. John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* 3.4 (PG 48:642D); ET NPNF[1] 9:46.

19. *The Liturgikon*, trans. Contos, 52.

20. St. John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* 3.5 (PG 48:645C); ET NPNF[1] 9:47.

21. St. John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* 4.4 (PG 48:664); ET NPNF[1] 9:65.

22. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 2* (PG 35:423); ET NPNF[2] 7:208.

23. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 2* (PG 35:412); ET NPNF[2] 7:205.

24. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 2* (PG 35:480); ET NPNF[2] 7:219.

25. Origen, *Homily 6 on Isaiah*, § 1, in Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte (GCS) 33, Origenes Werke 8, ed. W. A. Baehrens (Berlin, 1925), 269.

26. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Trallians* 3 (PG 5:855); see also the *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* 9.

27. St. John Chrysostom: "For Christ has given nothing sensible, but though in things sensible yet all to be perceived by the mind. So also in baptism, the gift is bestowed by a sensible thing, that is, by water; but that which is done is perceived by the mind, the birth, I mean, and the renewal. For if you had been incorporeal, He would have delivered you the incorporeal gifts bare; but because the soul has been locked up in a body, He delivers to you the things that the mind perceives, in things sensible" (*Homily 82 on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, PG 58:743; ET NPNF[1] 10:495, adapted).

28. Florovsky: "Like the Incarnation of the Word, [the Church] was also a historical occurrence, although mysterious and accessible only through faith. The mystery of the Church has a thoroughly paradoxical structure, like the mystery of Christ: the implicit antinomy of the Chalcedonian dogma. Two realities, divine and human, without fusion, but in an indivisible and perfect unity. One must distinguish between them, but one never dares to separate them" ("Le Corps du Christ vivant," 13).

Sergius Bulgakov: "In this sense everything in the Church is invisible and mysterious, it all surpasses the limits of the visible world; but still the invisible may become visible, and the fact that we may see the invisible is the very condition of the existence of the Church . . . 'The invisible' exists in the visible, is included in it; together they form a symbol. The word 'symbol' denotes a thing which belongs to this world, which is closely allied to it, but which has nevertheless a content in existence before all ages" (*The Orthodox Church* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1988], 4–5 and 7).

A. Khomiakov: "The Church confesses faith in herself . . . In this confession she shows that the knowledge about her existence is also a gift of the grace given from above, and it is accessible only to faith, not to reason . . . The visible Church is not only the community of the faithful, but also the Spirit of God and the grace of the sacraments present in this community. Thus, the visible Church too is seen only by the believers, because to the unbelievers the sacrament is just a ritual and the Church [is] just a society"

("Die Einheit der Kirche," 8, *Östliches Christentum*, vol. 2, *Philosophie*, ed. N. von Bubnoff and H. Ehrenberg [Munich, 1925], 11).

29. St. John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* 3.5 (PG 48:642); ET NPNF[1] 9:47.

30. Idem, *Homily 2 on Second Timothy* (NPNF[1] 13:481, adapted).

Chapter 4
Attributes of the Church as the Body of Christ

1. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 236.

2. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua* (PG 91:1280–81).

3. "Geworfen sein in der Welt" ("To be thrown into the world"), as Heidegger said.

4. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *When All Things Have Been Subjected* (PG 44:1317).

5. St. Athanasius the Great, *Against the Arians* 2.74 (PG 26:304).

6. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:517).

7. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *To the Philadelphians* 4. Metropolitan John D. Zizioulas says that "'communion' was the ultimate link in the 'common union' (Eusebius), while each Eucharist was offered for the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church from one end of the earth to the other, each Bishop being able to 'concede' the Eucharist to the Bishop of another Church (Anicetus of Rome to Polycarp) and each believer able to partake in the Eucharist of another Church" (*Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop during the First Three Centuries*, trans. Elizabeth Theokritoff [Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001], 161).

8. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 10 (PG 68:672B–C).

9. Ibid., bk. 17, col. 1113B.

10. Idem, *Glaphyra* (PG 69:56).

11. Although in other places in his work Karmiris strongly affirms the necessity of dogmatic unity for Church unity, he dubiously affirms the following out of a desire to be in agreement with all opinions: "Things being as they are, the existing division of the Church comes from things outside and below, not from the things inside and above; it comes from human beings, from their shortcomings and sins, [with the Church] being limited and almost disappearing before God, from whom, on the contrary, there comes the inner, mystical unity of the Church. Consequently, there is a unity [that is] supernatural and above the Word of the Church, a unity of her members with Christ in the Holy Spirit and among themselves. All Christians are united in a mystical and ineffable way with Christ and among themselves through the grace of the sacraments, of baptism and of the Eucharist" (*Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 242–43).

He mentions in the note, "That is why the Ecumenical Patriarchate did not hesitate to address the famous message from 1920 *To the Churches of*

Christ Everywhere, characterizing the Christian confessions as Churches and emphasizing that "it is imperative to invigorate and strengthen, before everything else, the love among the Churches, considering themselves not as strangers to one another but as related in Christ, and as one body and co-heirs of God's promises, in Christ."

Also in the note, Karmiris approvingly conveys Metropolitan Platon of Kiev's and John Meyendorff's views in this sense. Metropolitan Platon says, "If the universal Church is to be compared with a huge temple divided into many chapels, in the lower section [the chapels] are divided by walls, without these divisions reaching the roof. In the lower section the confessions are divided among themselves; in the higher section, in contrast, they are in a spiritual communion among themselves, and they all have the same entrance into heaven, at the roof of this mystical temple." And he quotes Meyendorff: "Christian unity is a unity with Christ in the Holy Spirit, and not a unity between men, which would be lost in history: this unity is in the one Church, which would not be divided by human disputes. Men cannot divide God and His truth" (*L'Église orthodoxe hier et aujourd'hui* [Paris, 1960], 189–90). H. Schultz does not draw such a conclusion ("Der Kirchenbegriff der orthodoxen Kirche," *Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie* 17 [1940]: 404).

But this is not a question of God's truth in itself but about the Church, or about the relationship of human persons with the whole Christ, through faith. He who does not have this relationship is not only separated from other Christians but is not fully united with Christ either.

12. In Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 262n1. This Response was written in 1718.

13. Ibid.

14. From the verbal process of the Seventh Ecumenical Council, in Jean Hardouin, *Acta Conciliorum*, 4:60.

15. [Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, no page number given.]

16. This idea of Western origin is also affirmed in a Romanian theological review in the article "Unitatea Bisericii în perspectivă ecumenică" (by Isidor Todoran, in *Ortodoxia*, no. 3, 1973), where it is said that "the unity of the Church is not broken" because "the division and separation of Christians refers only to the understanding and interpretation of the Church and of the content of faith." But then one asks the question: What is the true faith? Is it not known by any Church? Do all these interpretations have an equal value? Through this do we not enter into a relativism without escape?

17. [See note 94 for Metropolitan Platon (Gorodetsky) of Kiev's metaphor of the universal Church. – trans.]

18. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, offers many patristic texts indicating that the Church was blemished after the Fall.

19. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 5* (PG 44:868); ET Casimir McCambley (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1987), 114.

20. St. John Chrysostom, *On Psalm 5*, § 2 (PG 55:63); On *Psalm 44*, § 10 (PG 55:199).

21. Idem, *On Psalm 44*, § 10 (PG 55:199–200).

22. St. Maximus the Confessor views holiness as the overcoming of any duality between body and spirit, between sensible and intelligible knowledge, between man and God, between time and eternity (*Ambigua*, PG 91:1194). The unity of the Church's members is also a unity in the Spirit who sanctifies them, because it is a unity to which they contribute with their love. "All the members of the Church constitute one and the same body in Christ, in the unity of the Spirit, and all share with one another the benefit of divine gifts," says St. Basil the Great (*On the Holy Spirit*, PG 32:180).

23. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Adoration in Spirit and Truth*, bk. 9 (PG 68:625B).

24. Ibid., 620D.

25. Ibid., bk. 11, col. 760B.

26. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration 31* (PG 35:267).

27. Evdokimov, "Holiness in the Tradition," 102.

28. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in the *Romanian Philokalia* [in Romanian], trans. Dumitru Staniloae (Sibiu, Romania, 1947), 1:276; cf. PG 65:985–1028.

29. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in the *Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:288.

30. Ibid., 1:290.

31. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 13* (PG 44:1048); ET McCambley, 234.

32. Evdokimov, "Holiness in the Tradition," 99–100.

33. St. John Chrysostom, *On Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:458).

34. Evdokimov, "Holiness in the Tradition," 103.

35. Khomiakov, "Die Einheit der Kirche," 17.

36. Henri de Lubac says, "The Church is not Catholic because she is spread abroad over the whole of the earth and can reckon on a large number of members. She was already Catholic on the morning of Pentecost, when all her members could be contained in a small room, as she was when the Arian waves seemed on the point of swamping her; she would still be Catholic if tomorrow apostasy on a vast scale deprived her of almost all the faithful. For fundamentally Catholicity has nothing to do with geography or statistics. If it is true that it should be displayed over all the earth and be manifest to all, yet its nature is not material but spiritual" (*Le Catholicisme. Les aspects sociaux du dogme* [Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1938], 26; ET Lancelot C. Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund, *Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988], 48–49). However, de Lubac leaves us with the impression that he views catholicity more as a spatial potentiality.

37. Khomiakov, "Die Einheit der Kirche," 23.

38. St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit* 9.22 (PG 32:141); ET NPNF^2 8:15.

39. 122 St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit* 26.61 (PG 32:181); ET NPNF^2 8:39, adapted.

40. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 309.

41. Ibid., 311n1.

42. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 30 on First Corinthians* (PG 47:258); ET NPNF[1] 12:178, adapted.

43. Ibid.

44. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguum 41* (PG 91:1308A–B); ET "Difficulty 41," in Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (London: Routledge, 1996), 158.

45. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 313.

46. Ibid.

47. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lecture 18*, § 23 (PG 33:1044); ET NPNF[2] 7:140. Burkhard Josef Berkmann makes the following observation on the meaning of "plenitude" (or "catholicity") in St. Cyril of Jerusalem and relates this meaning to that of the same term in Blessed Augustine: "Cyril is aware that the word 'catholic' could have different meanings, depending on what is understood by the word 'ὅλον,' wholeness, applied to the Church: the totality of the world in a geographical sense, the totality of various groups within humankind, the totality of revelation, the totality of spiritual gifts, the totality of human sins and the corresponding totality of their healing. But this conception of his only came to be understood in the twentieth century. Augustine no longer uses this multiplicity of meanings in his dispute with the Donatists. He confines it to the geographical meaning. It is in this narrow sense that the word is used in the Middle Ages" (*Die Katholizität der Kirche* [Zürich, 1944], 15).

48. According to Georges Florovsky, "In most ancient documents, the term '*Ekklesia katholike*' was never used in a quantitative sense in order to designate the geographical expansion of the Church; it pointed rather to the understanding of faith and of the teaching, the fidelity of the Great Church to the plenary and primary tradition, in opposition to the sectarian and heretical tendencies that separated from this original plenitude, each one following a particular and particularist line. '*Katholike*' means '*orthodox*' rather than '*universal*' . . . True catholicity is catholicity *from within*, an internal quality of the Church, whose catholicity *from without* is just a manifestation" ("Le Corps du Christ vivant," 24, 26).

W. Beinert says, "The Catholic Church is the all-encompassing and perfect Church that comprises the entirety of plenitude. Her plenitude and perfection consists, according to Christ's plenitude and perfection, in the life of grace and in the revealed teaching" (*Um das dritte Kirchenattribut* [Essen: Ludgerus, 1964], 1:41). He adds, "The ancient Christian meaning of the word 'catholic' is: integrity, plenitude, perfection; the widespread meaning today sees its biblical basis in the Pauline theology of pleroma . . . This expression indicates the plenitude of Christian grace that according to God's purpose was granted to the Church to carry out Christ's plan of salvation to the eschatological end. 'Pleroma' is thus on the same plane with 'the body of Christ.' But this expression places more emphasis on the inclusion of nonbelievers in Christ, whereas 'pleroma' indicates the dimension of the Church

directed toward the world, on the basis of which the entire cosmos must be brought back within the grace of salvation" (ibid., 2:42).

49. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 6 on Ephesians* (PG 62:43ff.).

50. On the transmission of grace in the Church through the apostolic succession of bishops, St. Gregory of Nyssa says, "Those who were first instructed by grace and who became eyewitnesses of the Word did not keep the good just for themselves. They passed on the same grace to those who came after them [through succession]" (Commentary on the *Song of Songs, Homily 1*, PG 44:785; ET McCambley, 55). St. Clement of Alexandria says about the transmission of the teaching that "it descended to us, being taught unwritten through succession from Peter and James, John and Paul, and the [other] holy apostles" (*Stromata* 1.1.6–7, PG 8:700).

51. St. Irenaeus says, "Cum succesione episcopatus charisma veritatis certum" (*Against Heresies* 4.26.2–4, PG 7:1053, 1055). [That is, "with the succession of the episcopate, [priests] have received the certain gift of truth" (ANF 1:497).]

52. Karmiris, *Ἡ ορθόδοξος Εκκλησιολογία*, 316: "The apostolicity of the Church is not only historic but also always present."

Chapter 5
The Working of the Holy Spirit: Divine Grace and Human Freedom

1. We treated this theme at length in *Teologia Dogmatică şi Simbolică* [Dogmatic and Symbolic Theology], vol. 2 (Bucharest, 1958), 659–99.

2. St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymn 41*, in *Hymns of Divine Love*, trans. George A. Maloney (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1976), 208.

3. Idem, *Hymn 49*, lines 9, 11–15, in *Hymns of Divine Love*, 247.

4. The Holy Spirit "mysteriously identifies Himself with human persons whilst remaining incommunicable. He substitutes Himself, so to speak, for ourselves; for it is He who cries in our hearts Abba, Father! as St. Paul puts it. We should say, rather, that the Holy Spirit effaces Himself, as Person, before the created persons to whom He appropriates grace. In Him the will of God is no longer external to ourselves: it confers grace inwardly, manifesting itself within our very person in so far as our human will remains in accord with the divine will and co-operates with it in acquiring grace, in making it ours" (Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1976], 172–73).

5. St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.24.1 (PG 7:966).

6. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Η Θεομήτωρ. Τρεῖς Θεομητορικές Ομιλες*, ed. Panagiotis Nellas (Athens, 1968), 124.

7. St. Cyril of Alexandria, *On the Trinity* (PG 75:1177).

8. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Opuscula theologica et polemica* (PG 91:77C).

9. Ibid., 81A.

10. Ibid.

11. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 1 on Holy Pentecost* (PG 50:459).

12. Ibid., 456.

13. Ibid.

14. St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit* (PG 32:108).

15. *The Liturgikon*, trans. Contos, 91.

16. St. Gregory Palamas, "On the divine things, and on partaking of them," in *Γρηγορίου Παλαμᾶ, Τὰ συγγράμματα*, vol. 2, ed. Panagiotis Chrestou (Thessaloniki, 1966), 119.

17. St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 30 on First Corinthians* (PG 47:260); ET NPNF[1] 12:178, adapted.

18. Ibid.

19. St. Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit* (PG 32:181).

20. "The work of Christ concerns human nature which He recapitulates in His hypostasis. The work of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, concerns persons, being applied to each one singly . . . Thus, the work of Christ unifies; the work of the Holy Spirit diversifies" (Lossky, *Mystical Theology*, 166–67).

21. In an illustration from *Slujebnicul Mitropolitului Ştefan al Ungrovlahiei 1648–1668* by G. Popescu Vâlcea (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1974, illustration no. 38), as Jesus touches the end of the vine growing out of Him, at this end the Holy Spirit appears in the form of a dove, and thus the wine coming out of the vine is transformed into rays of power from the Holy Spirit, who transforms the wine into blood flowing into a cup that Jesus holds in His other hand. Christ is the one who sacrifices and the sacrifice, but out of the sacrifice and His act as the one offering the sacrifice there shines forth the Spirit, who contributes to the act of sacrifice and imprints it within the faithful.

22. John Meyendorff says, "It is within the framework of the Cyrillian thought that one understands what Leontius of Jerusalem meant when he spoke of the common hypostasis of Christ: a hypostasis that, instead of being another isolated and individualized hypostasis among all the hypostases that constitute the human nature, is the hypostatic archetype of the whole of mankind, in whom 'recapitulated' mankind, and not merely an individual, recovers union with God. This is possible only if Christ's manhood is not the human nature of a mere man (*ἀνθρώπου ψιλοῦ* or *γυμνοῦ*) but that of a hypostasis independent of the limitations of created nature" (*Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1975], 75).

23. "By uniting the Holy Spirit with God in a clear and exact way, the holy and divine Scripture teaches clearly that our communion with God is not produced in any other way except through the Holy Spirit. For our Lord Jesus Christ says about the faithful and good person, 'We will come to him and make Our home with him' [John 14:23] and 'By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit' [1 John 4:13]. Thus when someone is naturally and truly enriched in God, and has [the Spirit] abiding in himself, he does not receive the Spirit as a stranger and as separated from him by nature, but as the Spirit that is in him and is proper to

him. For the Father is in the Son and in the Holy Spirit; likewise, the Son and the Spirit are in the Father, and One in the Other" (St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Dialogue 7 on the Holy and Consubstantial Trinity*, PG 75:1092–93).

24. St. Maximus the Confessor says, "Therefore, the grace of the Holy Spirit does not operate wisdom in the saints without the mind with which to receive it, nor [does He operate] faith without the conviction of the mind and of the reason about future things and those not yet revealed, nor the gift of healing without the love for man according to nature" (*To Thalassius 39*, in the *Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 3:312).

25. "However, one must know that operation [ἐνέργεια] is one thing, what is operative [ἐνέργημα] another, which is operated another, and still another the operator. *Operation*, then, is the efficacious and substantial motion of the nature. And that which is *operative* is the nature from which the operation proceeds. That which is *operated* is the effect of the operation. And the *operator* is the one who performs the operation; the person, that is" (St. John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 3.15, PG 94:1048; ET Frederic H. Chase, Jr. [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1958], 304).

26. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit . . . And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all . . . for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit . . . to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit" (1 Cor 12:4, 6, 8–9).

Chapter 6
The Human Person's Salvation within the Body of Christ

1. Vladimir Lossky observes, "Nevertheless, when the dogma of the redemption is treated in isolation from the general body of Christian teaching, there is always a risk of limiting the tradition by interpreting it exclusively in terms of the work of the Redeemer. Then theological thought develops along three lines: original sin, its reparation on the cross, and the appropriation of the saving results of the work of Christ to Christians. In these constricting perspectives of a theology dominated by the idea of redemption, the patristic sentence: 'God made Himself man that man might become God,' seems to be strange and abnormal. The thought of union with God is forgotten because of our preoccupation solely with our own salvation; or, rather, union with God is seen only negatively, in contrast with our present wretchedness . . . If the thought of Anselm could stop at the redeeming work of Christ, isolating it from the rest of Christian teaching, constricting the horizons of tradition, it was precisely because in his time the West had already lost the true idea of the Person of the Holy Spirit, relegating Him to a secondary position by making Him into a kind of lieutenant or deputy of the Son" (*In the Image and Likeness of God* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974], 98–99, 103).

2. Panagiotis Nellas, *Ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ δικαίωσις κατὰ Νικόλαον Καβάσιλαν*, MS (Athens, 1974), 21.

3. Ibid., 24.

4. This is not an external peace between man and God; rather, it has opened to man the path for his infinite deification. The icons of saints in the Orthodox churches depict this perspective.

5. Nicholas Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ* (PG 150:588C).

6. Ibid., 659C.

7. Ibid., 589D.

8. This idea of Cabasilas is summed up by Nellas, *Ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ δικαίωσις*, 95–96.

9. Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ* (PG 150:612D–613A); ET Carmino J. deCatanzaro (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1974), 138.

10. Cabasilas, *The Life in Christ* (PG 150:681A); ET deCatanzaro, 191.

11. In this exposition of Cabasilas' doctrine we follow Nellas' excellent study, *Ἡ ἐν Χριστῷ δικαίωσις*, 116–17.

12. Ibid., 118.

13. Ibid., 125–26.

14. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in the *Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:309.

15. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 5* (PG 44:873D); ET McCambley, 118.

16. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 5* (PG 44:876B); ET McCambley, 119.

17. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 5* (PG 44:945C–D); ET McCambley, 164.

18. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Commentary on the Song of Songs, Homily 5* (PG 44:948–49); ET McCambley, 165–66.

19. St. Maximus the Confessor, *To Thalassius 59*, in the *Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 3:319.

20. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge and Discrimination: One Hundred Texts*, in *The Philokalia: The Complete Text*, 4 vols., trans. and ed. G. E. H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware (London: Faber and Faber, 1979–99), 1:279.

21. *Three Hundred Practical Chapters* 1.1, in the *Greek Philokalia*, 2nd ed. (Athens, 1893), 2:174.

22. St. Diadochos of Photiki says, "Satan is expelled from the soul by holy baptism, but is permitted to act upon it through the body for the reasons already mentioned. The grace of God, on the other hand, dwells in the very depths of the soul—that is to say, in the intellect" (§ 79) . . . "But we must not be surprised if after baptism we still have wicked as well as good thoughts. For although baptism removes from us the stain resulting from sin, it does not thereby heal the duality of our will immediately, neither does it prevent the demons from attacking us" (§ 78) (*On Spiritual Knowledge*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:280). It is our task, by

using the power dwelling in the depths of our being, to strengthen our will and our nature in the good.

23. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in *The Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:281.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 1:282. In his 153 chapters on prayer, Evagrius says, "The man who always dedicates his first thoughts to God has perfect prayer" (*On Prayer: One Hundred and Fifty-Three Texts*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:69).

26. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in *The Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:283.

27. Ibid.

28. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:285.

29. St. Gregory Palamas says, "The operation is an existential attribute"; "[human] nature is not whole, and it does not even exist without a will and an operation through which it is shown that it exists, but the nature is not these" (*First Refutation of Akindynos*, in *Τά συγγράμματα*, vol. 3, ed. Panagiotis Chrestou [Thessaloniki, 1970], 50).

30. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in *The Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:294–95.

31. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:256.

32. Ibid.

33. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in *The Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:291.

34. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:285.

35. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Baptism*, in *The Romanian Philokalia*, trans. Staniloae, 1:291.

36. St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourse 28* (SC 113:105–7); ET C. J. deCatanzaro, *The Discourses*, Classics of Western Spirituality (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1980), 295–307.

37. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:279.

38. St. Maximus the Confessor, *Four Hundred Texts on Love*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 2:89.

39. Ibid., 2:90.

40. Ibid., 2:63.

41. Ibid., 2:108.

42. Ibid.

43. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On the Spiritual Law: Two Hundred Texts*, in *The Philokalia*, trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:116.

44. Ibid.

45. See also St. Gregory of Nazianzus: "Faith without works is dead, as are works without faith" (*On Holy Baptism*, PG 36:424).

46. Here Diadochos gives the true explanation of the affirmation that Abraham became righteous through faith. Abraham showed his faith through the work of the most unlimited love for God not only through self-renunciation but also by giving up his future.

47. St. Diadochos of Photiki, *On Spiritual Knowledge,* in *The Philokalia,* trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:258.

48. Ibid., 1:280.

49. Ibid., 1:275.

50. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Those Who Think That They Are Made Righteous by Works: Two Hundred and Twenty-Six Texts,* in *The Philokalia,* trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:125.

51. St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Discourse 15,* in *The Discourses,* trans. deCatanzaro, 197.

52. St. Mark the Ascetic, *On Those Who Think That They Are Made Righteous,* in *The Philokalia,* trans. Palmer, Sherrard, and Ware, 1:129.

53. Idem, *On Baptism,* in *The Romanian Philokalia,* trans. Staniloae, 1:297.

54. "There can be no doubt that the one Word of God is the substance of virtue in each person. For our Lord Jesus Christ himself is the substance of all the virtues, as it is written: This one God made our wisdom, our justification, our sanctification and redemption (1 Cor 1:30). These things of course are said about him absolutely, since he is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification itself. They are not, as in our case, simply attributed to him . . . It is evident that every person who participates in virtue as a matter of habit unquestionably participates in God, the substance of the virtues" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguum 7,* PG 91:1081D; ET Paul M. Blowers and Robert Louis Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings from St. Maximus the Confessor* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003], 58).

55. "And through this course one becomes God, being made God by God. To the inherent goodness of the image is added the likeness (cf Gen 1:26) acquired by the practice of virtue and the exercise of the will" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguum 7,* PG 91:1084A; ET Blowers and Wilken, *On the Cosmic Mystery,* 59).

Volume 4:

The Church: Communion in the Holy Spirit

As we see in this volume and the others that constitute his *Dogmatic Theology,* Fr. Staniloae is both steeped in the ancient tradition and conversant with his contemporaries . . . The result in the present volume is a theological work focusing on the Church that draws on the voices of his tradition, studies the reflections of his contemporaries, and constructs a "traditional" synthesis that is unique and fresh.

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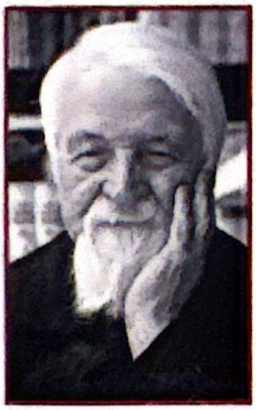
Peter C. Bouteneff
St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary



Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae (1903-93) is widely considered as one of the greatest Orthodox theologians of the twentieth century. He was Professor of Dogmatics at the Theological Institute in Bucharest, Romania, from 1947 to 1973. In 1990 he was made a Member of the Romanian Academy.

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